

SERMONS

O N

Public Occasions.

B Y

CHARLES BULKLEY.

Nihil est enim aptius ad delectationem lectoris, quam
temporum varietates, fortunæq; vicissitudines: quæ etsi
nobis optabiles in experiendo non fuerunt, in legendo
tamen erunt jucundæ.

CICER. FAM. EPIST. I. v. ep. 69.

L O N D O N,

Printed for JOHN NOON at the White Hart in
Cheapside; and, H. PAYNE, and W. CROPLEY
at Dryden's Head, in Pater-noster Row, 1761.

SERMONS

RIGHT HONORABLE

IN PUBLIC OCCASIONS.

BY

CHARLES BUCKLEY

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Printed for John Baskin, at the White Hart in
Cheapside; and by W. Groomer,
at the Golden Lion, in Parker's Row, 1761.

DEDICATION
TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
WILLIAM PITT, Esq;
One of His MAJESTY'S
Principal SECRETARIES of STATE.

S I R,

THE author of the following sermons, having originally composed, and now making them public, with the sincerest aim of contributing his part, according to the peculiar station, that has been by providence assigned him, in promoting the interests of his country, begs leave by inscribing them to you, to claim in their behalf the patronage of



DEDICATION.

a name, for which he has long had the highest esteem, on account of that resolution and vigor, with which you have been exerting your distinguished abilities for the security and advancement of our national happiness. To flatterie he has been ever averse. But he would by no means, under color of such a plea, decline the expressing his veneration for that conspicuous merit; the applause of which, tho' its noblest reward, is not, however less strictly due, than the censure of what is base and unworthy. He is sensible how highly he stands indebted to your active and uncorrupted patriotism for the pleasing views exhibited in some of these sermons bearing the latest date; of which, with all deference and respect, this address is designed as a grateful acknowledgement. Be pleased, Sir, to go on in serving

DEDICATION.

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serving your prince and country, and doing good to mankind, with the same ardent spirit, that has hitherto animated you in this glorious pursuit. And may your "memorie" be ever revered and "blessed" by all, who in future times shall be wishing well to the protestant religion, and the liberties of Great Britain. With all possible sincerity, I subscribe myself,

S I R,

Your very humble, and

Most obedient Servant,

January 30,
1761.

CHAS. BULKLEY.

DEDICATION.

Living without pain and sorrow, and
doing good to mankind, with the same
ardent spirit that has hitherto ani-
mated you in this glorious pursuit
and may your "memories" be ever
renewed and blessed by all who in
future times shall be wishing well to
the Protestant religion, and the libe-
rators of Great Britain. With all res-
pects, I subscribe myself,

SIR,

I am very humble,

Yours obedient servant,

CHAS. BEECHER.

P R E F A C E.

COMPOSITIONS of that peculiar nature with those, which constitute the present volume, are, for the most part, offered to the public in the detached and separate piece, founded upon some recent occasion given. The author owns the utility of that method, and has in a few instances complied with it. None of the following sermons, however, are of the number; they being now by him first of all sincerely dedicated to the service of his friends, his country, and his king. And he apprehends, that some advantages, distinct at least, if not more considerable, may arise from a representation of such subjects in this connected and ampler form. And of this too he has to plead some honorable examples.

In the *Serious Call to Personal Amendment*, the author has taken the libertie to speak of the period immediately succeeding the Reformation, as partly characterised by some palpable inconsistencies in the principles and conduct of those, who abetted it. it was by no means his intention in making such a remark, to sullie the honor or lessen the veneration

ration of those illustrious names, which appear with such distinguished merit, in the historie of that most necessary and laudable secession. Nevertheless "these things were written for our ensamples." And the hint was given for the sake of reminding those of the present times, that they are not of course to esteem themselves the intire and absolute sons of libertie, merely on account of their being professed members at large of the protestant communion. The remark too, might have been confirmed by undeniable facts. But to have entered upon that detail, would have been to narrate a historie, instead of delivering a sermon. He cannot, however, but here mention one particular instance in proof of it. "The States of Holland," it seems, "and West-Frieseland, had, in their over-abundant zeal for orthodoxy, ordered John and Peter Geesteran to retire to Gravesande, a village near the sea. Those two heterodox men set out to obey the orders of their sovereigns. In their way a strange thought came into their minds: they fancied their enemies designed to get them transported into England, in hopes they should be burnt alive in this countrie. For, some

“some years before, two antitrinitarians
“had been committed to the flames in
“England”---“wherefore those two de-
“graded ministers thought fit to conceal
“themselves.” How happily are we as-
sured, that, had they been living now, this
would have been one of the last *thoughts*
that could possibly have *come* into their
minds. Yet the celebrated Vorstius, in the
same period, that is, in the reign of our James
the First, is said to have labored under this
very panic. So much at that time was
England dreaded for its *burning* zeal. See
that very useful and edifying work; An
Abridgment of Gerard Brandt’s *Historie*, of
the Reformation in the Low-Countries,
Vol. II. p. 451, and 516,

To the sermon on the *Love of our Country*,
some perhaps may be ready to object, as
not exhibiting a just view of our national
character. But let the date of it be remem-
bered. The author would scorn to give
such a representation of our public manners
now. And yet, non progredi est regredi.
No where can this maxim be more justly ap-
plicable, than to the morals of a people.
And truly respectable as is the reformation,
that has been of late effected among our-
selves,

ourselves, it can only be considered, as a point, from which we shall either be verging with so much the more abundant shame to ruin, or gradually advancing towards the fullest consummation of national felicitie and glorie.

What in the *Tenth* of these Sermons has been insisted on concerning the tendencie of popish doctrines and discipline, to obstruct the exercise and debase the sentiments of devotion, may possibly be thought in some measure inconclusive, on account of the known and very eminent piety of some romish votaries. such instances the author is well aware of and sincerely rejoices in. And it is greatly to the honor of such persons, that, amidst so many incumberances, they could still elevate their minds into so sublime a state of intercourse with heaven, nay perhaps, render those superstitious practices, which from earliest life they had been taught so highly to revere, subservient to their pious ardors. But this is their honor alone. It is no recommendation of the practices themselves. The corrupt tendency of the popish doctrine and ceremonial is nevertheless precisely the same. And we cannot but conclude, that amidst so great a number of mankind

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mankind devoted to them, their corresponding effects must have been very fatal and extensive. There are those, who have enjoyed their health in a dungeon, and perhaps too had dexteritie and resolution enough, to convert the peculiar circumstances of so melancholie a situation into something pleasing and beneficial. But who would therefore willingly be confined to one? and how much more numerous the instances of those, who have perished there?

In the Sermon on the *Nature and Guilt of Murder*, the fatal tendencie of vitious practices even to accelerate the death of those, who are peculiarly interested in the character and prosperitie of such as indulge them, if not of those, under whose observation only they may happen to fall, has been urged, as a most dreadful aggravation of them. Of this we have a very remarkable instance in the emperor Severus, who, after having acquired the highest renown for his militarie atchievements and dauntless corage, died of grief for the profligacie and wickedness of his sons. An instance more remarkable still, as he was himself, notwithstanding some popular qualities, an execrable monster of avarice, dissimulation and cruelty.

Nor

Nor can it escape the observation of any, that the general argument made use of in that Sermon, by which to evince the horrid guilt of murdering another, must be equally conclusive against committing the like outrage upon a man's self. And as for duelling, it will, I believe, in most instances, and in the case of one of the parties at least, whatever may be the actual event, be found, upon a strictly moral examination, to involve in it the guilt of both these crimes at once.

It has been in the mild and happy reign of George the Second, that the author has enjoyed the unmolested libertie of speculating upon these and any other subjects whatsoever, relative to religion, morals or the civil interests of mankind, of acting in conformity to the resulting judgment and determination of his own mind, and of promoting the good of his fellow creatures, in whatsoever honest method these might dictate or suggest; a libertie, which in so many countries of the world, he could not have enjoyed at all, nor, as he presumes, so completely in any preceding British reign. He has therefore, in the last of these Sermons, attempted a grateful tribute to the memorie
of

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of a prince, whom himself, with so many thousands more, may have reason to revere even in the immortal regions of libertie and light.

He has now nothing farther to add, but that his friends may depend upon these, as being the absolutely genuine and identical Sermons, that were preached upon the several occasions specified; he having in the transcribing of them been rigidly punctual, and exact, in admitting no other alterations, than would have been universally allowed in preparing for the press any single Sermon of the kind, that was to be instantly published, after having been once delivered from the Pulpit.

of a prince, whom himself, with so many
 thousands more, may have reason to revere
 even in the immortal regions of liberty and
 light.
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 tions, than would have been universally al-
 lowed in preparing for the press any single
 sermon of the kind, that was to be in-
 finally published, after having been order-
 ed from the Pulpit.

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evil.*

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SERMON II.

On Occasion of the REBELLION in
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ISAIAH. VII. 5, 6.

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liab have taken evil counsel against thee, say-
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and let us make a breach therein for us, and
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*shall walk with me in white: for they are
worthie. He that overcometh the same shall
be clothed in white raiment; and I will not
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and the gates of hell shall not prevail against
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kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou
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Jerusalem were in the year of the

E R R A T A.

Page 24 line 24 after *hereafter* an interrogation, p. 43 l. 24 for *that* read *whom*, p. 53 l. 3 for *benefits* read *benefit*, p. 96 l. 26 for *thought* read *thoughts*, p. 112 l. 14, after *it* a full stop only, p. 137 l. 12 dele *comma* after *instance*, p. 261 l. 12 for *tranquilitie* read *tranquillitie*, p. 286 l. 6 for *accumalated* read *accumulated*, p. 308 l. 13 for *counsilis* read *counsels*, p. 311 l. 13 after *day* read *as*, p. 318 l. 26 before *equal* dele *an*, p. 339 l. 19 dele *comma* after *them*, p. 361 l. 9 for *their* read *her*, and l. 12, p. 411 l. 21 for *councils* read *counsels*, p. 422 l. 22 dele *that*, p. 429 l. 8 for *rem-berance* read *rememberance*.

On the DIVINE PATIENCE and
MEN'S ABUSE of it.

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED TO THE

UNITED CONGREGATIONS

OF

BARBICAN and WHITE's, ALLEY,

JANUARY the 9th, 1744-5;

BEING

A PUBLIC FAST.

On the Divine Providence and
Mans Affairs of the

E R M O N

UNITED CONSTITUTION

ERRATA and WHITE ALLEY

January the 1st 1855

A PUBLIC SALE

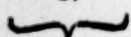
S E R M O N I.

ECCLESIAST. VIII. 11.

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

SINCE all men are born into the world with the same common nature, as they have the same original instincts, passions and affections, as there has always been the same diversitie in understanding, genius, taste and outward circumstances that we see at present, it may naturally be supposed, that the follies, and extravagancies of mankind, should appear in all ages and places to be much the same. Accordingly, if we look into the historie, either of former times or distant countries, we shall find, that this is really the case; or if we

SERM.
I.



take notice of the observations, that have been made by ancient writers upon the perverse conduct, whether of their contemporaries, or of those, who lived in the still preceding ages, we shall perceive, that their remarks are, generally speaking, as applicable to the present times, as to those, in which they were made, or to which they refer. Of this we may easily be satisfied by looking into the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes; which consist of a variety of reflections made by a person of the most consummate wisdom and experience, upon the conduct of mankind in his own days. The words of the text do, I apprehend, in particular, afford us an instance in support of this remark. It is here observed, that the lenitie and forbearance of God towards sinners in suffering them, notwithstanding their vices, to live in prosperitie and ease; and in delaying to punish them with the desolating and overwhelming judgments of an avenging providence, was so far from having any good effect upon them, so far from producing any of the fruits of gratitude or ingenuous repentance, that, on the contrarie, they were by this very clemencie itself, so much the more emboldened in giving the fullest scope
and

and Men's Abuse of it.

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S E R M.
I.

and licence to their disorderly appetites and pursuits. " Because sentence against an
" evil work is not executed speedily, there-
" fore the heart of the sons of men are
" fully set in them to do evil." Thus it
was in the days of Solomon. And St. Peter has made exactly the same remark, with respect to some profligate liveries of his time, specifying it as a matter of fact, by which, the " words, which had been spoken
" before by the holy prophets," were verified and fulfilled, that there were in those very times, which they referred to, when they spoke of " the last days," men, who lived in all manner of licentiousness, and openly avowed, that they encouraged themselves in doing so, by observing, that notwithstanding, the threatenings denounced against sinners, they themselves had not as yet been distinguished from others by any severities of providence. " Knowing, this,
" says he, that there shall come in the last
" days scoffers, walking after their own
" lusts, and saying, where is the promise of
" his coming? For since the fathers fell
" asleep, all things continue as they were
" from the beginning of the creation."
And, if we consider how much iniquities

B 3

abounds

S E R M.

I.

abounds amongst us of this land, and at the same time reflect upon that national prosperitie, which we have for so long a time enjoyed, we shall see the greatest reason to apprehend, that the latter, not indeed naturally and in itself, but thro' our own obstinacie and perverseness, is one considerable occasion of the former. I propose therefore at this time, to illustrate the subject of the text somewhat more distinctly and at large. And that in the following method.

First, I will endeavor to explain the supposition here made, that "sentence is not executed speedily against an evil work," by shewing in what reference and under what restrictions, it is to be understood.

Secondly, I shall inquire, how it comes to pass, that men so frequently and so dreadfully abuse this divine patience and forbearance exercised towards them, and in what manner it is that this clemencie and mildness, shewn to sinners, encourages them to sin the more. "*Because* sentence against an evil work is *not* executed speedily, *therefore* the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

After

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After which, it will, I hope be still farther conducing to the special purposes of our assembling together at this time, briefly to demonstrate the great unreasonableness and folly, the wickedness and danger of thus abusing the tender mercies of our God, and the lenitie of his providence. SERM.
I.

First, I am to explain the supposition here made, that "sentence is not executed speedily against an evil work," and briefly to inquire, in what reference and under what restrictions it is to be understood. Now we cannot imagine, that Solomon intended by it to intimate, that there was no distinction at all made by providence between the virtuous and the vitious in this life, that the individuals of these different characters were equally happy, or that it was the same thing, with respect to the welfare and prosperitie of a people, whether their prevailing character and manners were good or bad. He himself often supposes and even insists upon the contrarie, as a clear and undoubted maxim. "The fear of the Lord, he says, tendeth to life; he, that hath it, shall abide satisfied, he shall not be visited with evil;" "but judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools."

SERM.

I.

So again; "he, that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own soul, but he, that despiseth his way, shall die." And with respect to the more extended interests of civil communities in general, his observation is, that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people." To the same purpose in this very book of Ecclesiastes, it is thus, that he expresses himself. "wo unto thee, o land, when thy king is," in the levitie of his disposition, "a child, and thy princes eat in the morning: blessed art thou, o land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness." And in these observations and maxims, there is nothing but what is exactly agreeable to the real fact and undeniable truth of things. For what can be plainer, than that idleness tends to povertie, shame and miserie, that treacherous and dishonest dealing is, not only a certain injurie to the person imposed upon, but oftentimes brings the deceiver himself to infamie and ruin, nay, that it most certainly does so, in proportion to the degree of its enormitie, whenever it comes to be discovered, as at one time or another will generally

and Men's Abuse of it.

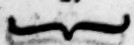
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SERM.
I.

rally happen, of which there is always danger, and about which therefore there must always be a solicitous apprehension and anxious fear; that intemperance, luxurie and excessive indulgence to sensual pleasures, impair the health of the bodie, waste both time and fortune, and must therefore, according to their direct and natural tendencie, introduce want, disgrace and perpetual jarring and confusion into families, and intirely subvert and destroy the order, peace, and harmonie of relative life; that this inordinacie of animal appetite enervates the mind, weakens the passion for libertie, and for every thing, that is generous and great, and must consequently lay us open, if indulged and suffered to predominate, to the insults and attempts of those, who would injure and oppress us, and make us an easy prey to such, as would invade our properties and rights; nay, that it even prevents our having the true relish of sensible pleasure itself, which is only to be enjoyed by moderate use and a corrected taste? what more evident, than that covetousness is only another name for uneasie desires, anxious cares and continual mortification of a man's self; that envie and discontent, which in the very
nature

SERM.

I.



nature and idea of them include everie thing gloomie, wretched and disquieting, are the immediate and necessarie effects of it; and that, as the possessions of this world are altogether uncertain and hazardous it must subject him to never-ceasing disappointment and vexations. The same is, in the general, true of ambition, the desires of which are as insatiable, its apprehensions as fearful and suspicious, it's cares and anxieties as numerous and great, and its object altogether as uncertain. Besides all which, are to be considered the uneasy reflections and bitter remorse of a man's own conscience; that greatest of all miseries, to which men of vitious and profligate characters are continually exposed, of which many of them have felt the most dreadful effects, which few, if any, of such a character, can wholly escape, and which, when far from being experienced in their utmost terror, are nevertheless sufficient to imbitter the most agreeable and prosperous circumstances of outward life. And even with respect to those hardships and afflictions, to which good men and bad are alike exposed, there is still a wide and important difference as to the manner, in which they are affected by them; the

and Men's Abuse of it.

II

SERM.

I.

the good man having the pleasures of conscious virtue, and the peaceable, satisfying reflections of his own mind, by which inward, that is, the only true happiness, may be secured amidst the most grievous and oppressing difficulties of his external condition. Whereas the other must be wholly destitute of every thing of this kind. And therefore when his outward circumstances are miserable, the man himself must be so, having no inward source of pleasure, and being deprived of that, in which alone he had placed his happiness. It is farther plain, that these miserable consequences of vice must be just as extensive as the practice of it; and that therefore, when vice becomes national, misery and shame must be so too. And this, notwithstanding the full enjoyment of all the civil rights, naturally belonging to society, and the possession of every thing, that can minister, either to the accommodation or elegance of outward life. And yet it is undeniably plain from the observations we have been making, that according to the natural tendencie of things, when vice and immoralitie become prevalent among a people, these too are in danger of being lost. The reflecting only upon
what

SERM.

I.

what has been already said, might amply suffice for our conviction in this matter. Nevertheless it may be confirmed at large out of the historie itself of kingdoms and nations; from which it appears in the fullest evidence of fact, that, as a people have advanced in luxurie and vice, they have sunk in riches, grandeur and libertie. And even from these few reflections alone it will, I hope, appear in a somewhat just and satisfactorie light, that miserie is the *natural* consequence of vice; national miserie of national vice. Now the course of nature; what is it, but the constitution and appointment of God, and the effect of his continued agencie in the government of the world? The original establishment therefore of this course and order of nature, is the *sentence* of the great God of nature against vice and wickedness, and its operation in the real state and issue of things the *execution* of it. So far then it is true, that “sentence is speedily “executed against” everie “evil work,” and punishment in a certain degree the immediate and inseparable consequence of it. But the great unhappiness is, that what comes to pass in a constant method, and according to an usual course and order of providence,

men

men give little or no attention to. And therefore, when by their vices they have plunged themselves into the most distressing hardships and misfortunes, either they do not consider these, as consequent upon their vices, or they content themselves with looking upon such calamities as the merely natural effects of the irregularities, they have indulged, without at all regarding or acknowledging them as proceeding from the agency and providence of Deitie, who first established and continues to support this connection between vice and miserie, and as punishments inflicted by him for their sins. And though this connection does in realitie and after a very strong and convincing manner demonstrate the displeasure of God against sin, yet so thoughtless and inconsiderate are the generalitie of mankind, but especially those of deeply profligate and immoral characters, that they will be affected by nothing, but what bears the aspect of prodigie and miracle; nor look upon any evil befalling them as the *sentence* of God against immoralitie and prophaneness, but what is out of the common way and, in a more than ordinarie manner desolating and tremendous. And when we speak of the
“ judgments ”

SERM. I. “ judgments” of God against sin, we usually refer to something of this kind; such as plagues, famine, earthquakes, devastations by fire, the desolations of the sword, the inroads and triumphs of a foreign enemy, or the confusion and calamities of a civil war. And it is according to this general and so much prevailing method of conceiving in this matter, that Solomon expresses himself in our text, and to these seemingly more awful and terrifying punishments of sin, that we are to consider him as referring, when he supposes, that “ sentence against it” is not in the course of a divine providence, “ executed speedily.” And in this sense the supposition is evidently founded upon the truth of the case. Often indeed has God shewn even his vengeance of this kind against a sinful people. But it is often seen too, that these severe and terrible judgments of the Almighty are inflicted upon one profane and wicked nation, and that evidently on account of, and as a punishment for their sins, whilst another, and perhaps a neighboring nation, to all appearance, equally immoral and abandoned, intirely escapes. And we ourselves may be one among the instances of a people most sadly degenerate and

and corrupted, yet continuing, through the infinite mercie and forbearance of God towards us, to enjoy all the desirable blessings of plentie, libertie, and internal peace. Thus it appears, in what sense we are to understand the supposition here made, that "sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily."

Before I pass on to the second general topic of discourse, I would make one remark upon what we have been thus far proposing to your attention. And that is, what an admirable mixture of divine patience and wisdom is observable in the conduct of providence and the government of the world! the divine patience; how clear and conspicuous is it in not immediately proceeding against sinners in the full severity of judgment. Notwithstanding the atrociousness and obstinacie of their guilt, seldom, in the strictest sense of the psalmist's expression, does the Almighty bring upon them "desolation, as "in a moment," but "maketh the sun "to rise on the evil and on the good, and "sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." And then equally conspicuous and clear is the admirable wisdom of God in so far punishing, by the natural consequences of vice, the wicked

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wicked and the prophane, even in the present world, as may be sufficient to convince men, if they will but properly attend to it, that virtue is his delight and law, that vice is rebellion against his government and authoritie and the object of his abhorrence; and that, if they go on to sin against him by abusing his favors and turning even his rich forbearance itself “into wantonness,” disdain to be influenced, by those *judgments*, which he *executes* here, to reformation and amendment, a far more dreadful doom awaits them, and that “tribulation and anguish” shall hereafter be the portion of “every soul of man that doeth evil,” But I proceed to inquire.

In the second place, how it comes to pass, that men are so extremely apt thus to abuse the divine patience and forbearance towards them; and in what manner it is, that all this mercie and compassion, on the part of heaven shewn to sinners, encourages them to sin the more. That it really does so, is too notorious to require any formal proof. And it is as plain, there can be no just reason, that it should. There must therefore be some delusion and wrong judgment in the case. And the pointing out the

the manner, as nearly as we can, in which it produces an effect so unreasonable, so unnatural, so fatal, may happily put us upon our guard against falling into the snare.

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In the first place then, when men find themselves uninterrupted in their career of vanitie, by any of those remarkable judgments refered to, they are apt on this account alone, to encourage themselves the more in that thoughtlessness and inconsideration, which we have already observed to be the general characteristic of inordinate and impious manners. Prosperitie and a long continued succession of ease and plenty are commonly seen, through a frailtie incident to human nature, to produce an effect of this kind. And even the disasters, which befall us in consequence of our vitious extravagancies and follies, because they happen in a visibly regular, stated and uniform manner, and are so often too the lot of others as well as ours, do not, according to what has been already observed, sufficiently excite the attention, and scarcely make any serious impressions upon the mind. And, when once men are become thoughtless, inconsiderate and wholly averse to serious and grave reflection, they are then easily wrought upon by the gay and

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flattering temptations of life, which will in such a state of mind be generally complied with; and thus the habit of wickedness be confirmed, and themselves, by this free, habitual indulgence to criminal and disorderly affections, prepared for advancing to almost any lengths in iniquitie. But,

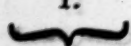
Secondly, when men go on in a continued series of outward prosperitie, without incurring any remarkable judgments of God against their prophaneness, they are tempted oftentimes into a secret infidelitie, or disbelief of his providence and moral government in the world; and are, even with some degree of confidence, led to presume, that there is no sovereign judge or ruler in the universe, that distinguishes between right and wrong, no super-intending power on high, either to regard them now or to punish them hereafter. They cannot but, upon frequently recurring thought and recollection, be convinced of their own wickedness and depravities, and that they themselves must needs be the proper objects of the divine vengeance, if there be indeed, “a righteous God, who judgeth in the earth.” But not feeling the final and full effects of his displeasure in the present life, and having little or no apprehension of another,

another, that is to succede it, and for which these final demonstrations of it may be reserved; being at the same time little used to consider those miseries, which they may perhaps even now be enduring, as the natural and divinely appointed consequence of their sins, they do, upon these grounds, rashly and presumptuously conclude, that there is in realitie, no such righteous governor or judge in nature. Thus it was in the instance already cited from St. Peter. This too was the manner of arguing with some prophane men in the days of Asaph. "They are not, says he, in trouble as other men," as they imagine "other men" to be, particularly the devout and virtuous part of mankind, or, as many of their fellow creatures really are, "neither are they plagued like other men;" "their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish;" and therefore it is, that they say; "how does God, know, and is there knowledge in the most high," or any notice taken by him of our conduct? Or,

Thirdly, tho' by this divine lenitie and forbearance, men should not be led to doubt of, or to denie, a divine government in the universe, yet from such mercie shewn them,

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they will sometimes make very rash and presumptuous, very false and mistaken inferences, with respect to the nature and moral character of the sovereign mind, and the consequent views and measures of his providence. They will not perhaps, deny his inspection and government in the affairs of the world; but they will at least, endeavor to persuade themselves, that he is too good and mild, too compassionate and merciful, to punish or deal severely with them, whether here or hereafter, for the liberties they may have taken in violating his laws. And, when men are, either degenerated into secret infidelitie, with respect to the government of a deity in nature, or have entertained such confused and mistaken notions, as these concerning his goodness and mercie, it is evident, that the principal supports of virtue are undermined; and it can be little wonder, that they should allow themselves in a fearless pursuit, of whatever their inordinate passions shall suggest as an object or gratification to be desired. But let us now go on in the

Third place, to point out the great unreasonableness and follie, the wickedness and danger of thus abusing the divine mercie and forbearance. And first from what has been
already

already said, it plainly appears to be founded upon a wrong supposition in the case. Because men see not the prophane swearer struck dead with lightening, or the falling beam; because the house of the hypocrite and deceiver is not destroyed by fire or swallowed up by an earthquake, or because the riotous and wanton debauchee is not snatched away by instantaneous death in the midst of his revels and madness, they encourage themselves, as we have seen, in concluding that sin is not punished upon earth, that there is no God, "who judgeth in the world," and that therefore they may securely indulge themselves in all the most extravagant gratifications of sense and appetite, and in the most violent invasions upon the rights and properties of their fellow creatures, for the sake of them. But consider seriously; and let me ask again, are there no families brought to infamie and ruin by drunkenness, idleness and luxurie? is not the hypocrite and man of deceit often; is he not generally detected? and are not reproach and contempt the certain consequence? are there none enduring even now the rack and torment of their own licentious practices? do siners never feel the remorse and agonies of

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conscience? and what is all this; but the effect, the punishment of sin? what, but the immediate judgment of God, and execution of a divine *sentence* against vice and iniquitie? and that to such a degree, as that the lives of many have been by these immediate and natural consequences of their vices rendered a burden to themselves and a horror to all around them, even amidst the greatest plentie and abundance of outward conveniences and delights? and have we not in all such instances so many standing monuments of the displeasure of God against sin?

But secondly, though vice be not now punished with any of those awful and remarkable judgments of heaven, which, it is acknowledged, that it most frequently, as is in the very nature of such severities implied, escapes, yet is this no just reason for concluding, that it will not meet with a dreadfully severe and awful recompence hereafter, upon our obstinately persisting in the practice of it. That there is a future state the whole frame and constitution of the human mind, the improvements it is capable of making, and in so many instances has actually arrived at, do strongly evince; since, on the contrarie supposition, it will be impossible to account for
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a constitution of nature, which must of necessity, supposing the present life to be the whole extent of our existence, at least in so great a variety of cases, fall short of that perfection, for which it appears to have been originally intended. and the scriptures of sacred truth do accordingly assure us, that “ the hour is coming, when they, that are
“ in their graves, shall hear the voice of the
“ son of man, and come forth; they, that
“ have done good, to the resurrection of life;
“ and they, who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.” By which declaration we are not only informed, that there is another state, in which sin may be more severely punished, but, that it is likewise in the determination and purpose of the sovereign Deitie thus to manifest his displeasure against it, when finally persisted in. Nor are there wanting, in support of the argument already insisted upon, and founded upon the original frame and powers of the human mind, even in the state of things at present, appearances, upon which to build a just apprehension, that the impenitent and unreclaimed sinner is to undergo the dreadful vengeance of God hereafter, how prosperous and splendid soever may be his outward circumstances now,

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or how little soever his ease and gaietie may be interrupted by any alarming judgments of heaven. For notwithstanding the promiscuous manner, in which external and temporal blessings are dispensed, yet is not true honor, and substantial happiness on virtue's side? is not the tendencie of vice to inward shame and real miserie? are not these plain intimations given us of the moral character and government of the Deitie? are they not at least the beginings of a distinction, naturally leading us to infer some succeeding state, in which it is to be advanced into perfect retribution? and do they not plainly shew us, that the design of that divine forbearance, which God exercises towards us in not dealing more severely with us at present, is to "lead us to repentance;" and, that therefore, if, instead of improving it to any such purpose, we, in direct contradiction to it, encourage ourselves by this forbearance in greater licentiousness and wickedness, such a monstrous and perverse abuse will be with awful justice, recompensed hereafter. For nothing certainly can be more weak and groundless, than to imagine, that, because the Deitie does not now inflict upon sinners judgments of the more severe and terrifying nature,

nature, therefore no such dreadful consequences are at all to be apprehended from their guilt, even admitting this future existence. Since, as the goodness of God, is not a partial fondness, but a steady and universal benevolence, and as all vice and immorality is essentially destructive of the happiness of his creatures, his very goodness itself must determine him to punish those; who wilfully, daringly, and, with persisting obstinacy, contradict the design of his creation, violate the sacred order of his works, and disturb and militate against the happiness of those, whom he brought into being on purpose that they might be happy.

In the third place, is it not most horrid ingratitude to make the very mercies of God exercised towards ourselves, an encouragement to our sinning against him? Gratitude is universally allowed to be one of the distinguishing characteristics of humanity, and among the noblest principles belonging to our nature. It is perhaps a principle too, the hardest to eradicate. And yet what can be a greater sign of a man's being wholly divested of it, than the not only sinning against so much divine goodness and patience, but the encouraging himself in doing so by the
very

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very thought and consideration of it? should we not look upon that child, as most wretchedly degenerate and corrupt, that would not only wilfully offend a kind and gracious parent, but even do it, *because* he was kind? certainly, if there be any sense of honor, any natural modestie, or ingenuous shame remaining, we shall not bear the thought of making goodness itself an argument for offending against and affronting it. Let us seriously reflect, how we ourselves should resent it, with what aversion, grief, and horror we should look upon it, if any, to whom we had been remarkably tender and indulgent, should distinguish themselves, as much by their ungrateful returns. And then let us consider, with what abhorrence and displeasure the sovereign being must behold the amazing disingenuitie and ingratitude of our own conduct, if we encourage ourselves to go on in sinning against him, because, notwithstanding all our former offences, he has abounded towards us in grace and compassion.

Fourthly, as we have before observed, that men are extremely apt, during a continued series of worldly prosperitie, uninterrupted by any distinguishing judgments of heaven,
to

to become habitually thoughtless and inconsiderate, and thus to be led on from one degree of iniquitie to another, without any inward check or controul, so from what has been offered, under the immediately preceding particulars, we may see in the clearest light and to the greatest advantage, their unreasonableness and follie in this respect. For is there nothing important, nothing worthie of our attention, but the uncommon events of providence, and the desolating judgments of the Almighty? are not all the “works of the Lord” great and illustrious? and what employment can there be more worthie of a rational mind, than that of contemplating the operations of divinitie so apparent in the beauteous and consummate order of nature? or what greater pleasure can we enjoy, than in tracing out these footsteps of the Almighty, and beholding, with devout and holie admiration, his extensive and universal goodness? what can be of higher importance, or more closely connected with the cultivation and improvement of the moral temper, than studying our own make and frame, and more especially our inward constitution, and the observing, how directly we are formed for
virtue,

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virtue, and how strongly by the tendencies and essential properties of our own nature, it is recommended to us, both as our happiness, and as our dutie, or, than the taking notice of and well attending to, the natural consequences of the several pursuits engaged in and passions indulged by mankind; from whence the love and approbation, with which the supreme being beholds the virtue of his creatures, his hatred of vice, his moral discipline and government exercised over man will be so clearly infered? and however it may be, that providence sees fit to deal with us, as to the external and temporal blessings of life, whether we pass our days in the full enjoyment of them, or whether by the “sending abroad of his judgments “ in the earth,” or by any personal afflictions, we are in some striking and awful manner deprived of them, still have we not immortal souls, that, independently of these, are capable both of intense and exquisite miserie, and of the most refined and elevated happiness? is there not in these several subjects of reflection, all so rich and copious, so grand and interesting, enough to employ our thoughts and to keep up, through life, the sedateness and seriousness of our tempers?

or

or are we, after all, so destitute of those generous principles naturally belonging to humanitie, so horridly degenerate and corrupt, so sunk in indolence, sensualitie and vice, so lost to all concern about our own most substantial and permanent felicitie, as that nothing can engage our attention, nothing make us think and be wise, but that which astonishes and affrights us? if things be so, then is our case bad indeed; but yet not, wholly desperate. For “with God is terrible majestie,” “to him vengeance belongeth;” and with him is an ample sufficiency of power for bringing upon us, whenever he thinks proper, those awakening and dreadful “judgments,” that shall not fail of putting us upon thinking, and of recalling “former days” into serious “remembrance.” But this naturally leads us to observe in the

Fifth place, that, when either individuals, or a national communitie, become so perverse, and hardened in their degeneracie, as to be in no degree influenced by these highly momentous and interesting considerations, but to remain altogether unaffected by the sweet and lovely order of nature’s works, by the abundant and perpetually flowing mercies of providence

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providence, by the principles of religion in general, or of christianitie in particular, how justly may we expect, that God should in the course and order of his universally-presiding government take other methods, and make them to “learn righteousness from “the severitie of his chastisements?” such awakening events of providence have in former ages taken place amongst us as a people. And “the Lord’s arm is not shortened;” he still possesses equal power to bring the like evils upon us again. And is not this what our profaneness and impietie, our thoughtlessness and vanitie, if persisted in, will naturally call for? will it not be convincing us in our own way, in the only way, which our perverseness and obstinacie has left for our amendment? if we will not “acknowledge God,” *because* he does not deal with us in the severitie of his wrath, how justly will our disingenuitie and base ingratitude in thus despising and abusing his long suffering and patience, demand at length this severitie at his hands? the most effectual method therefore of securing ourselves from the apprehensions of it, will be a due attention given to the great truths and doctrines of religion, a faithful improvement of those national

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tional privileges we enjoy, a conduct suitable to our intellectual nature, our moral frame, our christian character, our immortal hopes; and an immediate reformation and amendment of manners. And how happy indeed would be the prospect, could we but really see men humbled for their sins; could we but now observe the people of this land joining with "one heart and with one consent" in the renunciation of those iniquities, that have so long abounded amongst us; that rioting, luxurie and wild extravagance, that are bringing so many families to beggarie and ruin, that so lamentably enfeeble the rational powers, destroy and undermine the generous and social affections, of our natures, that unfit men for everie great attempt, dispose them to everie fordid, base, unnatural one, and leave them in possession of scarce any thing, but the mere, animal life, and the relishes of sense; and these too most sadly vitiated and depraved: that atheistic contempt of God, which is the reproach, of human nature, and, which, in proportion to its prevalence, must of necessitie sink it into meaness, shame and miserie; that swearing and prophaneness, for which we have so much reason deeply to
mourn,

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mourn, that neglect of religious duties and the appointed means of virtue, so apparent even amongst men of somewhat serious tempers; means so directly and manifestly adapted to keep alive the spirit and inward principle of goodness, and to the neglect of which we can not, I think, but justly ascribe, in a great measure, the present low state of morals amongst us. And have not each of us too our personal share in this scene of guilt? are there not “with us, even with us, sins “against the Lord God Almighty?” how little do our conduct and actions answer to our knowledge, privileges or profession? we see perhaps the “beauties of holiness” in a clear and striking light: we assert the charms and pleasures of virtue: we perceive and own it to be the honor of human nature, the best ornament of the mind and life, and the most substantial and sublime happiness of man. but how little do our vigor and activitie in virtuous pursuits answer to such ideas of it? We see, we acknowledge, we contend for the infinite and universal goodness of God; and are thus cherishing in our minds the most amiable apprehensions of his moral nature. yet how cold and spiritless our devotions towards him? how low

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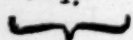
low our veneration even for sovereign goodness itself! how little are we affected with any ingenuous or grateful sense of those blessings, which we ourselves are continually deriving from it! and how little ambitious of imitating, in the exercise of our own charity and benevolence, this divine benigntie and love, with which we profess ourselves to be so highly charmed! We see the true design of christianitie, and are thoroughly convinced, that its supreme and ultimate aim, is to refine and exalt our natures by the cultivation and improvement of the divine image in our souls. we admire the happy subserviencie of all its doctrines to this end; and cannot but acknowledge it to be a transcendently useful, and sublimely excellent scheme of religion, everie way worthy of God, improving and salutarie to man. And yet how little are our tempers formed after the gospel-model? how poorly, how imperfectly do we exhibit, in life and conversation, the superlative worth and importance of christianitie, notwithstanding our own voluntarie profession of its principles, and clearest conviction of its truth! let these things, my brethren, upon this solemn, occasion, be seriously and deliberately recol-

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lected,

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lected, and, as we have each of us had our part in reducing religion to its present state of languor and decay, let each of us take his share in endeavoring to revive the spirit of it both in himself and others.

On

On OCCASION of the REBELLION
in SCOTLAND.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

SEPTEMBER 29, 1745.

Habet enim præteriti doloris secura recordatio delectationem.

CICER. EPIST. FAM. l. v. ep. 69.

OF THE REBELLION
AND OTTEND

A
F. R. M. O. N.

THE B. A. T. I. C. A. N.

THE B. A. T. I. C. A. N.

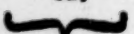
S E R M O N II.

ISAIAH. VII. 5, 6.

Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, let us go up against Judah and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.

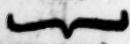
I Shall not enter now upon any particular inquire into that period of Jewish history, to which these words refer. It is enough to observe, that they are part of a message delivered by the prophet Isaiah to king Ahaz, on occasion of an attack, that was then actually made upon his dominions by Rezin, king of Assyria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, in order to

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dethrone him and to set up in his room, one, who is here called the son of Tabeal; of whom no other mention is made in scripture; but, who was probably some despicable and base pretender wholly devoted to their interest. How applicable they are to the present state of things in this nation, you will easily perceive. Though we have for some time been at war with two potent foreign powers, yet hitherto it has been carried on at a distance only, without any direct attempt upon that peace, which we have so long enjoyed “within our” own “borders.” But this happy state of tranquillity is now broken in upon. A foreign enemy is actually in our country, at the head of rebellious troops. Those dreadful calamities of war; slaughter and bloodshed, terror and confusion, have already begun their progress amongst us. And what quick advances they may make God only knows. These are things that demand our deepest and most serious attention; if, without looking to what may be the final result, we consider only, that havoc and disorder, and other fearful consequences, that must needs take place, in a country, where such hostilities are carried on: and should excite us to
put

put up our most ardent prayers to heaven, that they may have a speedy end; and to promote to the utmost of our power that unanimity, and to manifest that zeal and resolution, in defence of our liberties and of our country, that may strike terror into our enemies, and make them, as soon as possible, to desist from their iniquitous designs against us. But, if, extending our views, we consider what the final event of these things may be; it will appear, that every thing dear and valuable to ourselves, to posterity, and to neighboring nations, is depending on it. We have now a prince upon the throne, whose ancestors have, ever since the beginning of the reformation, been amongst the most zealous defenders of it, and of whose tender and equitable concern for the rights and liberties of his subjects, we have had long experience. under his mild and auspicious government we make a free and unmolested profession of religion, we worship God after our own manner, we search for truth, and are not afraid to speak it. And these great invaluable privileges, we have the highest reason to believe, will be held inviolably sacred by the sovereign authority among us, so long as he, or any of his royal



progenie, shall possess it, which heaven therefore grant may be, till "time" shall be "no more." But the man, whom our enemies would impose upon us, is the pretended son of a bigoted papist and bloody tyrant, brought up at Rome and supported by France. and what can give us a worse idea of him? need we any thing more to excite our greatest indignation at his attempt, and our apprehension of the most dreadful consequences, should he succede in it? The emissaries of France and Rome have indeed been diligent in propagating a notion, that this disturber of our peace, is, notwithstanding his education, and present profession of poperie, a good protestant at heart. And it is lamentable to think, that there should be any weak enough to believe it. Barefaced impudence and effronterie! as well might we believe, that the pope himself, with his purpled conclave, were converted to the protestant faith, and become all at once zealous asserters of libertie, private judgment and the reformation. Our enemies may make the fairest promises of libertie and toleration; and so might the devil himself, to serve a turn; and with as much design to keep them. Are those men ever to be believed, whose

Rebellion in Scotland.

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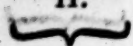
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whose very principle it is, "that no faith
" is to be kept with heretics;" who have
so often acted upon it; and whose reli-
gion allows them in all manner of deceit
and lying in the propagation of it? No,
Sirs, should the design, that is now carrying
on against us, take effect, our religion, our
peace, our libertie is no more.

Poperie and arbitrarie power, like two sister
furies, go hand in hand, and wherever they
fix their seat, spread miserie and desolation
all around them. And can it be, that
imagination itself should form the idea of a
greater evil, than, that of a free nation, after
having made a bold and noble stand in de-
fence of their privileges and libertie, be-
coming the conquered prey of an enemy,
eager after dominion, and thirsting for that
infamous glorie of being the tyrant of the
world? To a people, that are already slaves,
it is a matter of comparatively little import-
ance, who it is that victorie and conquest
make their masters. But to those, who
have once, and for ages past, enjoyed the
sweets of libertie, submission, after all, to
an insolent and oppressive conqueror, must be
in the highest degree grievous and detestable.
The more these glorious privileges have been
valued

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valued by the once happie possessors, with so much the greater keenness and furie will they be ravaged and despoiled by the foe, that heaven shall permit to triumph over them. The stouter has been the resistance, the more desperate and implacable will be the vengeance. And when once such a people become the slaves of tyrannical and lawless power, their wonted freedom will be looked back upon with sad remembrance, and as often as reflected on, serve only to render the present subjection still more vexatious and intolerable. And yet, this would be but too just a description of our own case, should providence permit the enemy now in arms against us to succede. We are at present, and have been for a long time, a free and protestant people, living under the protection of wholesome laws, and of a mild and friendly government; and what is our boast and glorie, has been long the envie of the foes we are contending with. Often have they attempted our ruin, and as often, thanks to propitious heaven, been disappointed. Should we therefore at length become their prey, we must expect to have our chains bound on with double strength and fastness; and to see the verie spirit of libertie

libertie, either degenerated into abject cowardice and servile subjection, or, if it lives, breathing in vain, and exerting itself, only to be baffled and made a jest of. And what will be the advantage of riches or plentie, when it is all at the disposal of a greedie and ambitious prince? how sadly will elevated genius, solid learning and fine imagination be checked and controled by the dictates and authoritie of an imposing court? and how will all the soft endearments of friends, of familie and of offspring be interrupted and made the source of the deepest anxietie and distress, by the capricious and arbitrarie interpositions of tyrannic will? look into the native and hereditarie countries of our enemies, and see how all the natural rights and privileges of mankind are invaded and laid waste; and then, think, what must be the fate of a conquered province. Neither would our religion be at all more secure, than our civil immunities or rights. The powers we are contending with are popish: and it is a popish pretender, that they would impose on us. And is it to be doubted, that, should they gain their point, they would immediately think of introducing among us, all that idolatrie and those absurd superstitions,
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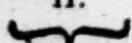
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which they call their religion; and that by violent and oppressive measures? for how can such gross and palpable contradictions to nature, sense and reason, as well as to the gospel, which yet under the name of gospel they avow, be ever enforced upon others, but by the concurring aids of artifice and cruelty? Till they give up their absurdities and idolatry, it can never be expected that they will lay aside either their persecution, or their frauds. And however artful and designing priests may misrepresent and falsify, and endeavor to persuade men, that their religion has nothing in it inconsistent with peace and good-nature, we have heard of the massacres of Paris and Ireland, in which so many brave protestants lost their lives, the expulsion of the Moriscoes from Spain in such numbers as to depopulate the country, the bloody persecution of the Marian days, here in England, and that of the Saltzburghers in much later times. And we have no reason to believe, that the spirit of popery is altered for the better. Nay, the inquisition still remains, breathing out its wonted cruelties. And dreadful will be the dilemma, either, to suffer imprisonment, racks and death, or to sacrifice our reason,

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conscience and honestie. Numbers no doubt will chuse to do the latter. And thus posteritie, thro' the unhappie prejudices of a blind education and stifled thought, will ignorantly, though perhaps honestly, embrace religion under the most unnatural disguise and corrupted form, that it has ever been constrained to wear. Thus the glorious search after truth will come to an end; the advances made towards restoring pure religion and primitive christianitie prove abortive, christian knowlege be exchanged for the deepest and most deplorable ignorance, and christian simplicitie converted into all the intrigues and knaverie of priestcraft and church politics. Thus the plain institutions of the gospel will be turned into solemn nonsense and pompous farce, and the worship of God into all that ridiculous pageantry and gaudy shew, that may please the fancies of children, but can never gratifie the taste or improve the tempers of men. Thus faith in Christ will come to stand for nothing else, but faith in the decrees and determinations of juggling synods and paultrie councils, or submission to the arbitrarie dictates, of a weak, decrepid, old man, called the pope, who seldom comes to the infallible chair,

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chair, till the infirmities of age, if not the debaucheries of youth, have deprived him of more than half his senses. And who, that wishes well, either to his fellow-creatures or to himself, who, that is concerned for the honor of religion, or the triumphs of the gospel, must not look upon such a scene, as this, even, though presenting itself in imagination only, with horror and distress! if we have any passion for libertie, any sincere or generous wish in behalf of posteritie, it cannot but be our most earnest hope, the intensely warm and animated desire of our souls, that the enemy may not prevail against us, but that success may be ours.

And these desires will it not be natural, with equal ardor, to offer up in prayer and supplication to God; since it is he only that can give success; and ought therefore to be thus devoutly acknowledged as the only source, from whence are to be derived the blessings we so much wish for? It is his "kingdom, that ruleth over all." And he does "what pleaseth him in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth" below. "In his hands are the hearts of all men; and he turneth even those of kings, whithersoever he pleaseth." And

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as the making such solemn acknowledgments of our dependance upon God, is a dutie thus naturally and obviously incumbent, so likewise will repeted contemplations of the wisdom and goodness of divine providence, in the best manner dispose our minds, amidst all the uncertaintie of human affairs, to a sedate and peaceful acquiescence in the measures of it, under the firm perswasion, that all things will be so ordered as most effectually to subserve the great and glorious purposes of the divine, universal government, even tho' our own particular desires should be frustrated and disappointed. And in the present state of our national concerns it is undoubtedly a matter of the highest moment, to preserve this just and happie medium between desponding fear and presumptuous confidence. Both these extremes equally tend to make men negligent, as to the use of proper means for their safetie. And in times of public danger, where everie one is alike concerned, these undue fears, on the one hand, or hopes on the other, are apt, in a very quick and surprizing manner, to diffuse themselves. And should either of them become generally prevalent, it would be a most dangerous and justly alarming symptom of
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our destruction. Here therefore it becomes every one to be upon his guard. When we consider how often providence has heretofore appeared in our favor against those verie enemies, that are now meditating our ruin, and that our cause is, not ours only, but that of Europe and the reformation in general, we may naturally entertain the hope, that " he, who has delivered will still deliver." And, though the probable means of success, which God has put into our hands, may be prevented from having that effect, by other secundarie, though not to us apparent, causes, operating, according to a divine appointment and order; and, tho' if such means should on the contrarie, prove successful, it will undoubtedly be owing, not to the means themselves independently and separately considered, but to the agencie of God accomplishing his providential measures by them, yet upon such favorable circumstances we may undoubtedly build the pleasing expectation of seeing a happy issue put to our present troubles. And, thanks be to God, such encouraging appearances, in relation to the final event of them, are by no means wanting. We have a prince, studious of our good, and endowed with corage, magnanimitie

nanimitie and resolution. We have strength by land and by sea. And it is to be hoped, that, notwithstanding the corruption, and venalitie, selfishness, and luxurie, that, alas, so much debase our public manners, there are yet many brave spirits, in everie rank among us, warmed with the love of their countrie, ready, with eager zeal and glowing fortitude, to appear in defence of it; and who would think, with the utmost scorn and indignation, of being the tame spectators of its ruin. These things are ground for hope and composure, though not of confidence and boasting. For we know, that
“ the race is not always to the swift, nor
“ the battle to the strong, nor yet bread to
“ the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill.” and how often does human foresight prove false and mistaken? So that, though our navie be strong and powerful, our armie vigorous and well disciplined, our treasures abundant, our councils sage and unanimous, we may, notwithstanding all, become a prey to those, who are now seeking our destruction. And is it not enough to check any vain and presumptuous confidence of success, to reflect only on the many crying iniquities and abominations, there are amongst us, which so

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justly deserve, and may, in their natural consequences, bring on those dreadful calamities, with which we are threatened by two powerful enemies? Let us therefore without any such confidence, on the one hand, or desponding fear, on the other, and with a calm and peaceful resignation of ourselves and all our valuable interests to the care of a wise and merciful providence, be diligent in the discharge of our present dutie. Let us cultivate and cherish in our minds all the great and noble principles of libertie and a generous concern for the public good. To be indifferent at such a time as this, is treason to our countrie and crueltie to future generations. Whereas, by strengthening those worthie and laudable dispositions, I am recommending, in our minds, we may happily fortifie ourselves with that vigor and resolution, which will enable us, should the necessitie of the times demand it, to act the noble part in defence of everie thing that is valuable or to be desired in human life. Let us then endeavor to raise in our breasts a generous indignation at the attempts of our enemies, by comparing our present situation, with that slavery, ignorance and wretchedness, which their success would most assuredly bring upon us. Think, again and again, of
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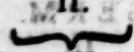
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the difference between having yourselves, your estates and your families at your own disposal, and the being imprisoned and tortured, the having your propertie rifled and laid waste, and your children torn from your embraces, at the will of a lawless tyrant, a wicked priest or a blood thirstie inquisitor. Think of that puritie of faith, and simplicitie of worship, in which we now glorie and rejoyce, and compare it with that deluge of error and superstition, which would then flow in upon us. Those of you, that know the pleasure of worshipping one God in the name of one mediator, think, what a sad exchange it will be to have your devotions confounded by a multiplicitie of saints, some of whom were perhaps, of a wicked and infamous character, others of them scarcely known or heard of in the world; nay, some in the goodly catalogue, it may be, never having so much as existed, except only in imaginarie and fabulous legends. Those of you, who have ever felt the pleasure, or known the advantage, of reading the scriptures in a language you understand, who are from day to day conversing with these sacred oracles of truth, and from thence deriving the noblest supports and consolations, the most



excellent rules of conduct, and the strongest motives for the observance of them, who find yourselves to be continually both delighted and improved by such exercises as these; who by reading over the historie of God's providential measures from the beginning of the world, can with holy triumph discern his glorious perfections in all; who by recuring from time to time to the devout writings of David and of Asaph find yourselves inflamed with the same heavenly spirit; who, by meditating upon the weightie and sententious sayings of the wise Solomon, are happily guided amidst the mazes and intricacies of this sinful and ensnaring world, who by studying the sacred oracles of evangelical truth and reviewing the wonders of redeeming love, that are there displayed, are animated, from day to day, with the most affectionate sentiments of love to God, to the kind and condescending Savior, and to your fellow creatures without exception or reserve, and participating in all the sublime satisfactions and delights of unfeigned and true religion; think, o think again, what a wretched, melancholie reverse, it would be, to have these sacred records locked up for ever from your view, and left in the hands

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hands of those, who, either cannot or will not, disclose their beauties to you. Those of you, that are duly sensible of the benefits and sacred refreshments to be received from the exercises of public and social worship, think how both the profit and the pleasure of them must be at once destroyed, should they ever come to be dispensed amongst us in a tongue unknown. In a word, think, how our brave ancestors have fought and bled and died, in defence of libertie and religion, and dread the infamie of being cursed by posteritie, as their degenerate and apostate sons. But there is something more to be done, than the raising only and cherishing just affections in our own breasts. Let us be using whatever influence we have over others towards exciting the same generous passions in theirs. Let us endeavor to instruct those, whose tender minds may be committed to our tuition, or over whom our conversation may be likely to have any effect of the same kind, in the just and rational principles of religion, and to point out to them, in the strongest light, both the iniquitie and the errors of poperie. This will be doing the highest service to the common cause. If we are not greatly mistaken in

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our suspicions, our enemies have been industrious in sending amongst us, those, who, by everie insinuating method, by their art in varnishing over absurditie, and their shameless impudence in downright falsehood and lying, may bid the fairest for making profelytes to what they call the catholic faith. But it is only with the ignorant and uninstructed that they can expect to succede. Amongst these it is, that they are ever hunting for their prey. We cannot therefore take a more effectual method for baffling and disconcerting their measures in this respect, than by endeavoring to sow the seeds of better principles among those who are either by their relation obliged, or by their temper disposed, to hearken either to our conversation, or our instructions. And, when once men see the follie and absurditie, of this pretended catholic faith in a strong and convincing light, they will not fail of having a proportionably warm indignation against all attempts to impose it upon them. endeavor therefore, so as far as your influence extends, to give others a just sense of poperie, as an high, enormous contradiction both to reason and christianitie. Tell them, how poor a pretence have proud, domineering, luxurious

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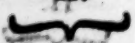
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luxurious and profligate bishops to call themselves the successors of the self-denying and humble apostles. Tell them with what inconsistency the claim of infallibility is advanced by a church, in which there have been councils against councils, and one pope hereticating another; and what an insignificant worthless infallibility must be that, which cannot secure the members of the church, that claims it, from disagreeing even in points of morality. Of which disagreement the dispute between the bishop of Meaux and the archbishop of Cambray about the love of God, is an undeniable instance. Tell them, that popery is nothing, but old heathenism revived, in another shape and under different names; and that putting only St. Dominic, St. Anthonie, and St. Nicholas, in the room of Jupiter, Apollo, and Æsculapius, Rome papal and Rome pagan will exactly agree. Tell them of their shameful absurdity in making what was once a piece of bread, to be the very body and blood of Jesus Christ, and ascribing this wonderful transformation to the efficacy of a few words pronounced, it may be, by a wretched and contemptible, perhaps a debauched and abandoned priest. Tell them, how incon-

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sistent a tyrannical, persecuting spirit is with the genius of the gospel, and with the meek and humble temper of its founder. Tell them, that the papists themselves are so much convinced of the palpable contrarietie of their doctrine to the tenor and maxims of the scriptures, that they do what they can to prevent their being consulted, or so much as looked into by the laitie.

But farther, another most important part of our dutie in the present juncture, is to do our utmost in discouraging luxurie and an excessive fondness for recreation and amusement. Voluptuousness and an unbounded pursuit of pleasure, have effects altogether as fatal upon the constitution of the mind, as upon that of the bodie. They weaken and enervate the generous passions of our nature, dissolve the man into an unthinking indolence and indifference, create a mean spirited and ignoble aversion to hardships and the encountering of dangers, and such a servile tameness, as renders a people an easie prey to tyrannie and oppression. And as from the natural tendencie of things might be presumed, it does from the historie of mankind appear, that generally when a people have lost their libertie, it has been

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owing to the enormous growth and prevalence of luxurie, which has gradually weakened the force and energie of their minds, made them idle, thoughtless, cowardly, and thus ripened them for a master. It is therefore everie man's concern, as he values the interest and prosperitie of his countrie, to be exerting himself, to the utmost of his power and influence, for preventing the progress of this destructive, epidemic, and, as it is to be feared, yet growing vice. Whenever we see occasion, and can have any tolerable hope of succeeding, let us denounce the prophets woe against the giddie and thoughtless rioters of this licentious age. " Woe
" unto them, that are at ease in Zion---that
" lie upon beds of ivorie, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the
" lambs out of the flock, and the calves out
" of the midst of the stall, that chant to
" the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of music like David,
" that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but
" they are not grieved for the affliction of
" Joseph." Let us at least do all that we can, towards discouraging such excessive indulgences of sense and appetite, by our own
example

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example in keeping at the remotest distance from them, and by the strictest observance of those rules of self-denial and moderation, which our most excellent religion inculcates, and of which its great founder has set us a pattern so complete. And let each one for himself be diligent and conscientious, not in this matter only, but in practising all the duties of religion and virtue. This will secure to us the favor of God, give us peace within, and the approbation of a good conscience; which will happily mitigate any external affliction: it will at least, if we “continue steadfast unto the end” “make us” to be “partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” “And this, considering, that it is an eternal weight of glorie,” how abundantly will it compensate for all the afflictions we can meet with here; which, however great and pressing in themselves, are, when compared with this future “recompense of reward,” to be deemed light and easie! Let us therefore endeavor, by “walking before God in righteousness and holiness all the days of our lives,” “to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through,

“nor

“ nor steal,” where tyrannie and ambition can disturb no more, and where all will be peace and serenitie, delight and joy. And “ where” our “ treasure is, there let” our “ hearts be also;” deriving thence their support and comfort, amidst all the changes, troubles and uncertain prospects of this present world. Nor can we, as members of the communitie, and as persons concerned for its welfare, better manifest our public spiritedness, than by the righteousness, integritie and universal goodness of our conduct. Those of us, that can serve the public in no other way, may at least do it in this. Let us therefore “ break off our sins “ by righteousness, and our iniquities, by “ shewing mercie to the poor.” Let us humble ourselves before God for our past transgressions, and on account of our sad deficiencie in the practice of our dutie. And let it be our unfeigned resolution, that for the future we will live to the glorie of our reasonable nature, to the honor of our christian profession, and, as much as possible, to the happiness of our christian brother and of our native countrie. Let all anger, “ wrath, “ malice and evil speaking be laid aside;” censoriousness, bigotry and uncharitableness

be

be quite forgotten; and let us unite with one heart and voice, with conspiring zeal and fervor, in the common cause of British libertie, primitive christianitie, and practical godliness.

“Remember, o my friends, the laws, the rights,

“The generous plan of power delivered down,

“From age to age, by your renown’d forefathers;

“So dearly bought, the price of so much blood!

“O let it never perish in your hands!

“But piously transmit it to your children.

“Do thou, great libertie, inspire our souls,

“And make our lives in thy possession happier;

“Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.”

A SERIOUS CALL to PERSONAL
AMENDMENT:

IN A
S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 2, 1745.

Being a Day fixed upon by several Congregations, for
Uniting in humble Prayer to God, on Account
of the REBELLION in SCOTLAND.

Quid leges sine moribus
Vanæ proficiunt?

HOR. CARM. l. iii. od. 24.

EXTRACT FROM THE
MEMORIAL

S E R M O N

PREACHED BY BARRINGTON

ON

THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND
ON THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND
ON THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND

AND THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND
ON THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND

SERMON III.

REVELATION. III. 1, 2, 3.

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; these things, says he, that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are readie to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

IN a discourse delivered on the last Lord's day, in this place, and in the hearing of many now present, I endeavored to excite a just sense of our dutie in that situation of our public affairs, which has given
occasion

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III.

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occasion to this day's solemnitie by pointing out those dreadful consequences, which would most certainly follow upon our enemies succeding in that unrighteous and wicked attempt, which they are now carrying on against us. And it is the same general design I have in view in selecting this passage of scripture for the subject of the ensuing discourse. At such a time, as this, when we are engaged in a war abroad, when we have in our own countrie an enemy malicious, desperate, and in some measure successful, when the present inconveniencies of these things are so sensibly felt, when we are in pain and fear about the final event, to us uncertain and precarious, nothing can be of greater importance, than national reformation and public virtue. This is what, I believe, will be denied by none, and is frequently insisted upon and proved at large, upon such occasions as these. But the great difficultie is; how is such a reformation to be effected. General observations upon the necessitie of it, in order to national prosperitie, have, it is to be feared, the smallest influence, where amendment is most requisite. Now, as the reformation and virtue of a communitie, must needs consist in the
personal

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their notions of christianitie, not from the gospel itself, but from the pretendedly-infallible dictates of those, who, in order to subserve their own selfish and worldly views, had altogether corrupted and debased it; yet, at length, by the glorious reformation the word of God was rescued from that ignominious darkness, in which, till then, it had, for so long a period, lain; and everie one had the libertie, of perusing and judging of it for himself. for a good while after this indeed, religion, was, in comparison, but little studied or understood among us. Our forefathers, even of this reformed church, retained many of their old prejudices. They had been so long accustomed to slavery in matters of religion, that they knew not how to use the libertie, which, in that respect, at length they gained; and appear indeed to have been far from entertaining the just or consistent notion of it. Those, who had themselves asserted and claimed the right of private judgment by their separation from the church of Rome, would not allow others to use it in dissenting from themselves. But the never to be forgotten revolution perfected what the reformation had so happily begun. Religious and civil libertie, by their

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just and natural coalition, made us a joyful and a happy people. christianitie then became the subject of deliberate, honest, free inquiry. its evidences have been clearly stated: the difficulties and objections relating to it considered and obviated. The foundations of natural religion, have been by strong, conclusive reasoning, established, and the duties of it in the most amiable view described. The connection between it and miraculously reveled religion has been perceived, and in its just light exhibited. And we have learned to conceive of the gospel, as intended, not to supersede, much less to contradict, the light of nature, but to restore and to improve it; not, as a system of speculations and mysteries, designed to baffle and confound human reason, and to be believed and wondered at, without being either understood, or to any practical purposes applied; but, as a most perfect rule of life and scheme of moral doctrine, intended to regulate the passions, purifie and refine the temper, restore the image of God in the soul of man, and thus to lay the foundations of a sublime and endless felicitie in everie respect adapted to our social natures, to our intelligent and moral frame. And need I to

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inform you, how admirably it is fitted for answering these great and glorious purposes; what amiable views it gives us of the character and perfections of God, representing him, as supreme in goodness, as the author and "giver of everie good and perfect gift," as the father and friend of all his creatures, as ever readie to help our infirmities, and to pardon the sins of those, who sincerely repent and "amend their doings;" and yet, as a God, who will by no means "clear
" the guiltie, whose eyes are upon the ways
" of men, who pondereth all their steps, to
" whom all things are naked and open," but who approveth the virtuous and the upright only, "hating all the "workers of
" iniquitie?" does it not set our dutie before us in the most easie, comprehensive, forcible, and engaging light, by teaching us, that it consists in doing to "others,
" as, we desire, they should do unto us;" in loving and imitating God, in doing good to man, and in that universal sobriety, temperance and moderation, which is alike conducive both to private and to general happiness? does it not place in our view the most lively, striking example of everie thing, that is virtuous and praise worthie,

in

in the conduct of its glorious founder,
“ who went about doing good; whose meat
“ and drink it was to do the will of his fa-
“ ther, who is in heaven;” and who en-
dured even the pain and ignominie of the
cross itself, in order to accomplish it? does
it not afford us the noblest and in the highest
degree inspiring motives to the practice of
all good, amidst the most discouraging adver-
sities of human life, as well as in opposition to
its most alluring temptations, not only by
asserting the realitie of a future state, a state
of rational, pure, sublime, uninterrupted
and never-ending joys, prepared for the good
and pious; but by giving us an exprefs sample
or specimen of it in the resurrection, ascen-
sion, and glorious exaltation of the re-
deemer at the “ right hand of his father?”
These, Sirs, are some of the great, im-
portant truths contained in the gospel, in
that word of God, to which you have
free access, which you may read in your
own familiar language, for the better un-
derstanding of which you have the fairest
advantages; and with which, it is to be
hoped, that you are daily conversing. These
are the truths, to which you are called upon
to hearken, from week to week, in our public
F 3 assemblies.

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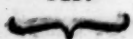
assemblies. These the subjects of our prayers, our reasoning, our exhortations. These the truths, which you do, which at least, you may, you ought to make the frequent topic both of your private meditations and your conversation with one another. These are the privileges you enjoy; this the religion you profess. And this the profession, of which, in the

Second place, the apostle is directed to remind the church of Sardis. "Thou hast a name to live," or, "that thou livest." And is it not thus too with our selves? Not content with believing the truth of christianity, do we not publicly declare that belief? are we not professing the highest regard to it, in the constant course and tenor of our actions? many of us have done this after the most solemn and deliberate manner in our baptism, and are often renewing the like solemn vows in our attendance upon the sacramental supper. And what does our regular and stated appearance in such assemblies as these, what our appointed days of prayer and humiliation; our endeavors to support an orderly and well educated ministry, our zeal in defending christianity, whenever attacked by sceptics and the disbelievers

lievers of it, our “contending” with so much earnestness for the “faith once delivered to “the saints,” when even we apprehend it to have been misrepresented by any of its friends; the concern we shew for having our children educated in the principles of religion and of the christian faith, our avowed enmitie and aversion to poperie, our glorying in the “name” of protestant, our declaring, with so much laudable ardor and resolution, for a protestant government and a protestant succession; what, I say, do all these particulars amount to? are they not one continued profession of some eminently high regard, that we have for religion and of our concern for its interest and success in the world around us, as well as desire of feeling in our own hearts its fullest influence and power? what could the church of Sardis have done more; concerning whom it is said, that they had “a name to live?” And is the name all? was christianitie introduced into the world, ushered in with such a long series of prophesie, confirmed by such numerous, great, illustrious miracles; did the “only begotten son” of God become incarnate, “a man” of povertie and “sorrow;” did he endure shame, contempt and death, only to

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furnish some part of mankind with a new "name," by which to distinguish themselves from the rest of their fellow creatures? has the mere "name" of a christian any thing in it more excellent, more dignifying to the person that assumes it, or tending to make him more acceptable in the sight of God, than that of a Turk or a heathen? surely, from such a profession something of spirit and realitie in religion might naturally be looked for. What pitie is it, nay what shame, that all this profession, should be mere form, or so very little more! that men, that reasonable creatures should be acting such an inconsistent, self-contradictorie part, as to live at random and without aim or purpose; to profess so solemnly, so publickly, so constantly, and yet to mean little or nothing all the while! that such inconsistency and self-contradiction, should be so much more flagrant, as well as the instances of it more commonly apparent, in religion than in any thing else! when men profess any liberal science or mechanic art, we see them for the most part bending their pursuits that way, studying the accuracies and embellishments of it, and making these, and not the mere profession of such an art or science

science the subject of their highest boast. SERM.
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but where's the christian "that minds his
"business!" alas! we content ourselves with
giving it out that we are christians, and
think no more about it. And this is the

Third particular upon which the apostle
was to expostulate with the church of Sar-
dis; and which, God knows, is but too ap-
plicable to ourselves; formalitie in their
profession. "thou hast a name, that thou
"livest, but art dead." Of how many among
the zealous professors of religion in our days
may it be said, as it is here concerning some
in the church of Sardis, that as to any thing
of its genuine spirit, they are quite senseless
and dead. They have indeed, the outward
shape and mein of it; just as a dead corpse
has of that of a man; but all the life is gone;
or perhaps, those, I am speaking of, re-
sembling more the statue of a man, was never
there. Though they "come before God,
"as his people come" on the days of our
solemn, social worship, nay, though "they
"draw nigh unto him with their lips" in
private, yet is it in mere form alone: "their
"hearts are far from him;" unaffected
with a sense of his goodness towards them,
without love or reverence of his adorable
perfections, and destitute of all desire, either

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to find, or to have impressed, his image upon their souls. And though from week to week they associate with their fellow christians, yet never recollect, "these are my brethren, my brethren in nature, my brethren in the Lord, my countrymen, my acquaintance, my neighbors, my relations; whose welfare therefore I ought to be concerned for, whose ease and happiness I am to consult, whose wants I should endeavor to supply to the utmost of my power, whose troubles I am bound to alleviate by friendly conversation and counsel, and whom I should be solicitously careful, not myself to grieve or offend by my own ill conduct towards them;" but, instead of entertaining any such sentiments or views; are living wholly to themselves, contracted within their own little minds, plodding after the world, keeping all they get, and perhaps "grinding the face of the poor" and straitening their families, to increase their store; or, if allowing freely to those of their "own household," the conveniencies and accommodations of life, making their days uncomfortable by sourness and ill-nature, behaving towards them like tyrants, and treating, it may be, their children, their relatives, their servants, with as much haughtiness and

and insolence, as, if they were but “ the
“ dogs of their flock.” Blessed be God,
these things are not true of all, and that
there are numbers among us, who live so
far conformably to their profession, as to be
christians in heart and temper, as well as in
“ name,” and to have a principle of love to
God and man prevailing in their souls. But
yet even in the number of these are there not
some; who, though not dead, though the
principle still remain in them, are yet in the
language of the text “ readie to die;” who,
though they live, are almost motionless, not
caring to stir or exert themselves “ in the
“ work of the Lord;” who, though they
may indeed conscientiously enough avoid in-
juring their neighbor, and be willing even
to serve and befriend him, when an oppor-
tunitie of that kind presents itself in the com-
mon course of their lives, and if it be not,
what they will call, too great a trouble, and
too great a sacrifice of their own ease and
interest; yet seldom or never seek after the
occasions of doing good, rarely act with life
and vigor, or care for encountering difficul-
ties, or running the smallest hazard, for the
sake of a christian brother; contenting them-
selves with a low, unanimated virtue, little
able

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able to oppose itself to any irregularities of temper, of which they may be sensible, and which perhaps, they would gladly be rid of, if this could be without any trouble of their own. To whom, in short, agrees the character given of the Laodiceans; "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." Others there are, possessed of a principle of virtue, not only sincere and prevailing, but even vigorous and active; concerning whom nevertheless it may be said, that they are far from having attained to that degree of goodness, which might naturally be expected as resulting from the many singular advantages for virtuous improvement, which they enjoy. And these are they, of whom our Savior says in the text; "I have not found thy works perfect before God." The word we here render perfect, literally signifies *filled*. "I have not found thy work filled before God." And must not the best of us indeed acknowledge, that there are many void spaces in our lives, that might have been "filled" up with something great and generous, many barren hours and days, that might have been wisely and usefully spent, and have not? Can we think of no friend or neighbor whose

whose sorrows we have been unaffected with, whose interest and welfare we have been unconcerned about, whom we have not served, if served at all, with so much faithfulness and vigor, as we might? have we never hardened our hearts against the poor, when it has been "in the power of our hands" to relieve them? have we never vexed our brother by ill-timed or unfriendly censures? never carried our resentments too far? never suffered our passions of any other kind to exceed their proper limits? have we never felt some little, secret triumphs of heart, which we should have been ashamed to own, when a competitor in business has been crossed, or a rival in fame mortified? never envied their success? are we conscious to ourselves of no mixture of vanitie in some worthie and honorable actions, for which a blank is to be left in the estimate of our virtues? can we recollect no formal prayers, no unprofitable days of public devotion? in short, must not the best of us, upon a serious review of our lives, discern much, to be ashamed of, much, concerning which we must be forced to own, that it falls vastly beneath the dignitie and obligations of our christian character, and, on account of which, we ought with all
lowliness

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lowliness and humilitie to adopt the words of the great apostle; "I have not yet attained, neither am I already perfect." But this leads us to the consideration of what in the

Fourth place, St. John is here directed to represent to the church of Sardis; and that is; their dutie. "Be watchful and strengthen the things, which remain and are readie to die---remember therefore how thou hast received and heard and hold fast and repent." The word here rendered "watchful," is the same, tho' in a different mood or form of grammar, which is used by St. Paul, when he says; "Christ died for us, that, whether we *wake* or *sleep*, we should live together with him." And according to its connexion here the sense of it would, I apprehend, be more exactly conveyed to the English reader by the terms; awake thyself; agreeably to St. Paul's exhortation, using indeed another word, but of the same import: "awake; thou that sleepest and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light." And these passages, by the way, may shew us how much they are mistaken, who would infer, from what the scripture says concerning

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ing mens being "dead in trespasses and sins;" that we are by nature wholly incapable of doing any thing, that is truly good or at all well-pleasing in the sight of heaven; as intirely so, as a dead man is of performing any of the actions or duties of this life. For, besides that this kind of language is never there applied to any, relatively to that original nature, with which we are born into the world; but has always a reference, either to a state of actual guilt and depravitie, that had preceded their conversion to christianitie, or else to that formalitie and indifference in religion, which they had fallen into since; besides this, I say, we find exhortations addressed to these very persons, even, when they are said to be dead. thus, in the passage already refered to; "awake, thou, that sleepest, and arise from the dead," and likewise in our text; "I know thy works, that thou hast the name of living, but art in realitie dead; awake thyself and strengthen the things, that remain." But to what purpose should we address any such exhortations to persons absolutely incapable of attending to, or being in the least degree affected by them? who would exhort a dead man to awake, to live, or to perform any of the
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the customary actions of life? These phrases therefore are purely figurative and metaphorical, and considered in that light are at once bold and striking, natural and of easie interpretation. But, if figures are to be strained to the utmost stretch of literal comparison, we may find absurdities and contradictions enough, not only in scripture, but in all writings whatsoever, and indeed in almost everie conversation that passes between man and man. But to return; let me now adress these serious exhortations of the text to the severall sorts of persons mentioned under the immediately preceding heads. and first; to him, that is a mere formalist in religion; proceeding no farther in it, than its external part; awake thyself, o thou hypocrite in Zion, and consider, whether this be a conduct worthie of that reasonable nature, of which thou art possessed, if any such thou hast, and art willing to own and acknowledge thy self endowed with it; whether mere form and ceremonie, talking and noise about religion, is all, that a reasonable creature is capable of attaining to, or all, that can be expected from him, in order to his acting a part becoming his nature and worthie of himself? Consider, whether such formalitie can

can be of any avail in the sight of that
“ God, who is a spirit,” and who requires
of all, who profess to be his worshipers,
that they be such “ in spirit and in truth ;”
and whom it is impossible to deceive by the
most specious, artful, close disguises ; since
“ all things are naked and open to his eye ;”
nor “ is there a word on our tongue or a
“ thought in our hearts :” but “ lo he
“ knows it altogether :” whether it must
not, on the contrarie, highly aggravate both
thy guilt and wretchedness. since, by this
merely outward profession, thou art not only
“ deceiving thine own heart,” but art per-
haps presumptuous enough to think of im-
posing even upon the Almighty himself.
consider, whether it can ever be seriously be-
lieved, that the Son of God came into the
world, according to the purpose, and by the
appointment, of the sovereign Father, only
to furnish thee with a few forms and cere-
monies, with something to talk about ;
something that might serve as a convenient
mask for thy vices, or as a commutation for
“ living soberly, righteously and godly.”
consider, how shocking, how impious it
must be to say or to assert this deliberately
and coolly. And must it not be at least

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equally

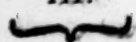
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equally shocking, equally impious, to live from day to day, and from year to year, as if it was true? Repent therefore and “turn
“ from your evil doings; trust ye not in lying words, saying the temple of the Lord,
“ the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these; but execute thoroughly
“ judgment between a man and his neighbor, oppress not the stranger, the fatherless or the widow, do justice, love mercie, and walk humbly with thy God,”
“ awake in time; awake to righteousness, and virtue,” ere thou awakest to that awful scene of judgment, which is to separate between the righteous and the vile, and when to the latter, in a sense so inexpressibly dreadful, it shall be said, “depart, ye cursed,” even into “everlasting fire, prepared for
“ the devil and his angels.” And let the cold and lukewarm in religion consider, that this is far from being the spirit, that justly answers to those eminent privileges they enjoy. is this all the effect, that so pure and holy a religion has had upon us? and can we really think it enough? this all the effect of our public and so long continued profession in religion, of our solemn, and so often repeated vows! does all our libertie of inquirie,
all

all our boasted light and knowlege, all our zeal in contending about religion, and in asserting its puritie, excellence and dignitie terminate in this; that we are just within the verge, of that "holiness, without which "no man is to see the Lord." what could be said less of the comparatively benighted, but yet virtuous heathen? or what slighter attainments ascribed to those, who have lived in the days of the greatest ignorance, darkness, and slavery, in point of religion? O, Sirs, it is high time for us, either to forbear professing an esteem for the gospel so warm and sanguine, as that which many of us are seeming at least to have imbibed, and rather to conceal such full convictions of its excellencie, worth and importance, as we are ever and anon expressing, or else to resolve upon living after a sort more worthie of "it, and to cause our light so to shine "before men, that they" also "may glorifie "our father, who is in heaven." It is high time to drop our pretensions to more correct thinking and to sentiments more refined in religion, than those of our popish ancestors, unless we studie to be likewise more correct in manners, more refined in life and temper, and make it our serious and habitual aim, to

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excel them, as much in virtue as we do in privileges and light. without this how will that, which is now the subject of our boast and glorie, be turned into a foundation of the most acute and pungent remorse in some future, but yet approaching, day! Consider, what a glorious state of immortal and sublime felicitie is before us. and can we willingly content ourselves with being the lowest in the kingdom of heaven? can we relish the thought, that manie of those, who have lived under all possible disadvantages, consistent with any knowlege, any profession at all, of christianitie, should, upon their admission into this future world, be invested with more exalted honors, than we of this inquisitive and enlightened age? And by such considerations as these, let even such, as have made the highest improvements in virtue, be excited to the diligent searching and trial of their ways. Sublime and godlike, as may be our moral attainments, are there not yet manie things in our conduct, that need correction and amendment? For God's sake, let us set about it in earnest. " For-
 " getting those things, that are behind, let
 " us press forward towards those, which are
 " before; towards the mark of the prize,

“ of the high calling of God, which is in
“ Christ Jesus.” “ an high calling” indeed
is that of a christian; and higher still in our
day, when christianitie is with so much
greater freedom examined, and so much
better understood, than in the times of our
forefathers! and, o, what care and circum-
spection, what resolution, zeal and vigor,
will it demand, in order to our acting agree-
ably to it! Let us then “ lift up the hands,
“ that hang down and strengthen the feeble
“ knees.” At such a time, as this, “ when
“ the judgments of God are” abroad “ in
“ the land;” when “ we hear of war and
“ rumors of war,” when so manie of our
dear countrie-men are suffering amidst the
confusion, devastation, and terrors of it; and
others in fear of the like impending fate, it is
surely proper, and may upon the most natural
and obvious principles be expected, that men
of everie character, those, who have made the
most eminent and distinguished attainments
in virtue, as well as those of the lowest class
in it, should, with the utmost seriousness of
temper, applie themselves to the “ learn-
“ ing of righteousness.” Let us not be
alarmed in vain, but “ stir up ourselves” to
“ lay hold” on God our maker. This is the

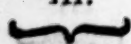
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very intent of heaven in giving us these alarms. And how happy a thing will it be, when these fears and troubles are over, as we trust in God, that ere long they will be; and a pleasing calm and tranquillitie returns upon us; to sit down and think upon the improvement, that we have made of that seriousness and more sedate reflections that they have occasioned. And on the contrarie, how sad, that God should “speak unto us once “yea, twice,” and yet men, christians, not hearken to or regard it. Now therefore let us “humble ourselves in the dust before God;” and say, “unto us, o Lord, belongeth “shame and confusion of face,” because we have sined against thee; and with sincere, unfeigned resolution, let us add; we “have “born chastisement, we will not offend any “more.” And to this purpose let us once more, and in the

Fifth place, consider, the danger we must needs incur by neglecting the duties thus naturally and with so much reason incumbent on us. and this is what the text expresses in saying; “if therefore thou wilt “not be watchful, I will come upon thee, “as a thief, and thou shalt not know, what “hour I will come upon thee.” The uncertainty

certainie of death, and the shortness of our abode in this present life, is sometimes in scripture denoted by our Savior's coming upon us suddenly; he having "the keys of hell," or, as by all means it should have been rendered, of hades, that is, of the invisible world, "and of death;" by which we are transmited into it. But, as the words of the text are addressed to a whole societie of christians, I apprehend, that this final clause of it, contains an awful threatening, that, if they were not more careful to improve their christian privileges, they should by the righteous judgment of God, be ere long deprived of them; and thus to be of the same import, with what is addressed to the church of Ephesus, as follows. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works, else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." These and other like threatenings here so solemnly denounced against the seven churches of Asia, have been as solemnly fulfilled; for scarcely now are the traces of those churches to be found. The same threatening was denounced against Jerusalem and the Jewish nation; and as

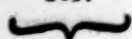
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awfully fulfilled. “ Therefore, say I unto
“ you, the kingdom of God shall be taken
“ from you, and given to a nation bringing
“ forth the fruits thereof.” And, though
there be no such woe as this, upon record,
against ourselves; yet do not our present
alarms plainly enough carrie in them such a
voice of threatening and of judgment? And,
though God does not always in fact punish a
sinful nation in the manner, which is in these
instances so awfully apparent, but bears long
with them, even though rebelling against
him, “ with an high hand and out-stretched
“ arm;” yet in such examples we see,
that it is sometimes agreeable to the wise
design and method of his government to do
so. And is not even this consideration alone
sufficient to make us tremble “ for the ark
“ of God,” and excite a jealousy of our-
selves, least we should be the nation now
ripened for being the object of his vengeance;
unless a speedie repentance and “ the
“ awakening ourselves to the fear of the
“ Lord and to the remembrance of his
“ holiness,” and the improvement of those
glorious christian privileges we enjoy, hap-
pily avert it? how aggravated and heinous
must the sins of this land appear, when com-
pared

pared with all our distinguishing advantages for the cultivation and practice of virtue, as a reformed and protestant church! how dreadfully will the account be enhanced, if we take into it, that profaneness and impiety, that swearing, adulterie, rioting and drunkenness, for which this "land mourns;" or ought at least with the deepest contrition and abasement. These are things not mentioned or so much as remotely hinted at in our text, no doubt there were in the church of Sardis some such characters as these. But, we see, it was a sufficient charge against them, that, though they had not indeed cast off the profession of religion, but might perhaps be very zealous in maintaining one, yet they were merely formal and hypocritical, even in their most solemn pretensions to it. Upon this alone the dreadful woe denounced against them is founded. how much reason then have we to "stand in awe," when we consider, that, besides the numbers among us, who are so far from assuming any appearances of religion, that they are even public professors of ungodliness, there are in the number of those, that wear the form of it, so manie, that go no farther; so manie, that procede but little farther, and that

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that the best of us are so far from duly comporting with the dignitie of our exalted christian character! Let us consider these things, and “ shew ourselves men” and lovers of our countrie in doing all we can, by our sincere and humble repentance, towards averting from us the judgments of heaven. And “ whatsoever our hand findeth to do” in the way of religion, and of serious, fervent pietie, let us “ do it with all our “ might;” and in the humble hope, that we may still be a “ people saved of the “ Lord.” Or however it may fare with us as a nation, we shall in this way be sure of “ delivering, everie man, his own soul.”

The

The peculiar Excellencie of UNTAINTED
and INFLEXIBLE VIRTUE in a lukewarm
and degenerate Age.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 13, 1745,

The peculiar Excellence of Christianity
and Inflexible Virtue in the
and degenerate Age.

S E R M O N

Preached at BARRICKAN,

October 17, 1788.

SERMON IV.

REVELATION. III. 4, 5, 6.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthie. He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear, what the spirit saith unto the churches.

THES E words are part of an important and awakening message delivered, from our Savior, by the mouth of his servant John, to the church of Sardis, the chief citie of Lydia, in Asia the less. It is ushered in with a grand and sublime

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sublime description of his character and office, as the person, who had “ the seven “ spirits of God;” that is, was the dispenser of those various powers, gifts and endowments of an extraordinarie and miraculous nature, which were in that earliest age of christianitie so frequently conferred upon the believers of it. It is added; “ and the seven “ stars,” expressing his primacie or headship over all the christian churches, and especially the seven churches of Asia; which were at that time such eminent lights in the world. And by these characters is he pointed out to them, as being everie way completely qualified and impowered for disposing of these high, peculiar blessings, in the manner, that should best be suited to the respective state and circumstances of these churches morally considered, and best adapted for answering the ends of that spiritual kingdom, which he came into the world to erect. And it concludes with a solemn appeal to their own judgment and reason. “ He that hath an “ ear,” everie one, that is capable of understanding and attending to these things, “ let him hear what the spirit saith to the “ churches;” let him with the utmost seriousness and care hearken to the message, that

that is now delivered to them. In the former part of it, which I endeavored at large to commend to your consideration, on a late occasion, a very severe rebuke is addressed to them, on account of the little care they had taken to improve those christian privileges they had enjoyed. Some of them we find charged in it with downright hypocrisie and formalitie in their profession; others with great lukewarmness and indifference; nay, the best of them with a want of that vigor, zeal and resolution in the practice of virtue, which might justly be expected from the disciples of so holie a religion. At the same time, however, it is, by way of consolation, suggested to them in our text; that those among them, who, in the midst of all this degeneracie, had retained their virtue pure and uncorrupted, were not without the gracious redeemer's notice; "thou hast a few names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments:" nor without his peculiar approbation; "they are worthie:" and that they should not be without their peculiar reward hereafter; for that is the import of the expression following; "they shall walk with me in white;" this kind of vesture being in the eastern countries worn

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by the most eminent personages, and looked upon as the token of an honorable distinction. On which account the prophet Daniel makes use of the like figure in his magnificent description of the Deitie, or, as we may here perhaps rather interpret him, of the Son of God, “ who lay in the bosom of the Father “ from the beginning,” and who is hereafter to appear, as his representative upon the seat of universal judgment. “ I beheld, “ till the thrones were cast down, and the “ ancient of days did sit, whose garment was “ white as snow, and the hair of his head “ like the pure wool, his throne was like “ the fierie flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fierie stream issued and came “ forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: “ the judgment was set and the books were “ opened.”

That part then of the solemn message here recorded as originally delivered to the Sardinian church, and which we have chosen at this time to discourse upon, will naturally leads us to employ our thought, both on the peculiar excellencie and the eminent reward of an untainted and inflexible virtue, in the midst

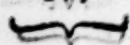
midst of a lukewarm and degenerate age. These two particulars therefore I shall endeavor briefly to illustrate, and then conclude with some proper application.

Now the distinguishing excellencie of such a character will appear, in the first place, from considering the peculiar danger we are in, and the peculiar temptations we lie under, in times of general depravities and lukewarmness, of becoming ourselves remiss and careless in the practice of our duties. It is on account of these, that persons of such a character are spoken of in our text as *overcoming*.

“ He that *overcometh* the same shall be “ clothed in white raiment.” Imitation is natural to the human mind; and the influence of example surprizingly great. There are few, even among men of the most established character for wisdom and virtue, that can boast an absolute securitie of temper against a contagion of this sort. And tho’ its effects are so common, so certain, and in the end so visible; yet does it operate in a manner so gradual and imperceptible, as to give reason and reflection, conscience and our moral feelings no alarm. We are off our guard, because we see no danger. And manie there are, no doubt, who, upon a

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more deliberate and serious view of their conduct and the principles upon which they have acted, than they have hitherto allowed themselves to take, may find, that they have only been copying after others, whilst they have thought themselves to be following the pure and uncontrolled dictates of their own enlightened understanding. When a man would corrupt my honestie with a bribe, or lead me into companie, that might prove dangerous to my virtue and integritie, when we are threatened with persecution for the sake of religion, and on account of our conscientious adherence to what we believe to be the principles and dictates of it; the temptation is visible, and we have then particular and expresse warning given us to be upon our guard, and to fortifie our minds with all the strength and resolution we are masters of. But it is otherwise in the case of ill examples generally prevailing in the age we live in. The danger is full as great, more constant, and at the same time less apparent. It is the danger, not of an hostile attack, but of an infectious distemper. And, as a person, after having gone through all the hazards of war unhurt, may, in the end, become the prey of some sickly contagion, insinuating

sinuating itself insensibly into his vital frame, so it is to be feared, there may be those, who, after having rejected, with disdain, the greatest worldly offers, that have been made them, as the price of their integritie, and even, after having bravely encountered the violence of persecution itself, have at length been overcome by the baneful and destructive influences of custom and example. And, as in times of a plague or other epidemical distemper, those, who escape, may ascribe it, not so much to any present precautions, which are oftentimes impossible, and often ineffectual, as to a constitution naturally sound and good, and able by its original strength and vigor to repel the infection; so in times of general formalitie in religion and dissoluteness of manners, the preserving ourselves intirely free from the contagion, must needs indicate a virtue peculiarly strong, and able by its own intrinsic force and energie, to resist and keep it off. Nay, as we are expert at imitating, before we are so much as capable of reflection or reasoning, and as our first character, is commonly such as we have received from the impressions of education, it will generally happen, in times of prevailing corruption in morals, or

indifference in religion, that the man, who would be inflexibly virtuous, and keep himself unfullied by the vices, which so many of those about him are daily practising, must have the contrarie principle of virtue strong enough, not only to repel the infection, that is continually hovering about him, but even to clear his mind of that, which has actually taken hold of it, and been introduced into it by the early impressions of education; which, as they are the earliest and first, so they take the deepest root, and are with the greatest difficultie overcome. And then, besides all this, it is to be farther considered, that in an age, when the very notion and appearance of religion is by many avowedly despised and ridiculed, and when the generalitie of those, who profess any regard to it, are so much contenting themselves with that mere profession alone, little mindful of those practical and moral obligations it lays them under; there will of course be a singularity in a strict and conscientious attachment to virtuous maxims, exposing a man to the scorn and contempt of manie; not to say, as will however in some instances be the case, to worldly disadvantages and inconveniences. Persons, who treat religion with a
professed

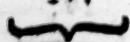
professed indifference or contempt, have a strange way of assuming all the sprightliness and genius of the age to themselves. and others, it seems, are to be looked upon as dull, unanimated souls, that tread with a superstitious reverence the old beaten track, afraid of deviating, in the smallest instance, from the footsteps of those, that have gone before them. And let a man be ever so thoroughly convinced of the excellencie and importance of religion, it will require a considerable degree of corage, to appear resolute and zealous in its cause, or to discover our esteem of it, either in conversation or even by our practice, when in doing so, we run the hazard of being counted men of a low and antiquated taste. To be warm and steadfast advocates for christianitie, even upon a rational and well-grounded conviction of its divine authoritie and unspeakable importance, when it is by so many bantered and made a jest of, as an exploded scheme, for which indeed, the credulous and unthinking may still retain some reverence, but which, the men of wit and penetration have long ago discovered to be incapable of any solid defence, and when those, who plead in its behalf, are so likely to incur the censure of

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bigotry, for which indeed, the contracted and narrow temper of many professing it, has given but too just an occasion; to be resolute and unshaken in our pursuit of the public good, when the very notion of a public spirit is treated by many, either as a mere enthusiastical chimera, or political invention only; to observe with an inviolable regularitie and exactness, the rules of temperance and moderation, in a gay, licentious age, when we must, either run into all the fashionable extravagances, or content ourselves with being deemed unfociable and morose: such a conduct, I say, as this calls for a much greater degree of virtuous corage and strength of mind, than could be strictly necessary in more serious and sober times; especially, when, to their abundant reproach, even those, who profess religion, are, by their own remissness and indifference in the practice of its duties, countenancing that contempt, which others, either upon avowed principles, or from the inclinations of a depraved and wicked mind, are so frequently casting upon it. And from these severall considerations laid together and concurring to shew the peculiar danger we are exposed to, and temptations we lie under
in

in such a degenerate age, it will appear with how much peculiar propriety and emphasis it may be said of those, who notwithstanding all, have “ kept their garments undefiled,” that “ they are worthy.” But the worth of such a character will be still farther illustrated, by considering in the

Next place, the singular usefulness of it. Persons of untainted and inflexible virtue, in the midst of times so degenerate, are the great supports of religion in the world, when it is almost forsaken and abandoned, and surrounded on all sides with either open or treacherous enemies. And, whilst there are a few so steady in its cause, there is then amongst a corrupted, sinful people, an apparent means of recovery and amendment. And the having such a means of reformation within themselves, may happily avert those terrible judgments, which might otherwise be brought upon them, in order to turn them from their iniquities. when a nation is totally corrupted, and the lukewarmness and degeneracy become almost strictly universal, there seems then to be no other method for their recovery left, but that of severity and righteous indignation. But so long as there remain a “ few, that have not



“ defiled their garments,” there is some room for entertaining the humble hope, that God intends, and will, in his great mercie, chuse, to bring about the national repentance and amendment, rather by the instrumentality of their zeal and virtue, than by the terrors of his wrath. In this sense it is, that a nation may be saved “ for the sake, or on “ account, of the few righteous that dwell “ therein.” That is, their pietie, integritie, and zeal, being one method, by which a general reformation may be effected, it may, on this account, become perfectly consistent with the wisdom of providence to forbear making use of other and severer methods for that purpose. This is a sentiment plainly pointed out to us in the instance of Sodom; in behalf of which place Abraham is introduced as carrying on a personal intercourse and conference with the Almighty. The general meaning and intent of which representation, is evidently this; that God is “ slow to anger,” that he “ delighteth “ not in the death of sinners,” but “ had “ rather that they would repent and live;” and that he would not have brought such a terrible destruction upon that citie, had it not been for such a total profligacie and wickedness,

wickedness, into which they had degenerated, as made it to be absolutely necessarie.

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Thus have I endeavored to illustrate the peculiar worth and excellencie of the character spoken of in our text; that of those honorably distinguished few, who, in the times of general depravitie, have not “defiled their garments.” Persons of such a character, our Savior assures us, shall meet with a peculiar reward hereafter; “they shall walk with me in white.” And the reason given for this distinguishing reward is that peculiar worth and virtue, which, as appears from what has been said, their character supposes; “for they are worthie.” The highest possible degree of virtue indeed, even that of sinless obedience, cannot, without the greatest absurditie, be thought to lay a foundation for any claims to the future happiness of heaven, upon the footing of justice or of debt. Our very capacitie both for virtue and happiness, is the free gift of God. And, as he is eternally, independently, and completely blessed in himself, “after we have done all,” must we not of necessity say, that, “we are unprofitable servants” unto him? Much less can it be thought, that creatures, who, notwithstanding

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ing their best attainments, are chargeable with so manie guiltie follies and criminal defects, should have any such claim at his hands. Nevertheless, as God is a being of infinite holiness and goodness, the image and resemblance of these perfections in his creatures, must ever be the object of his approbation and delight. And we cannot but apprehend, that the degree of approbation will be in proportion to the degree, in which we bear it. those therefore will be the highest objects of this divine complacencie, in whom the resemblance is strongest and most complete, and consequently have the highest degree of happiness assigned to them in the distribution of the final recompence. Accordingly the new testament, when speaking of the rewards hereafter to be bestowed upon the good and virtuous, has clearly enough suggested to us this idea of them. Thus our Savior, not at present to insist upon any farther proof in a point, I presume, sufficiently obvious, represents the king in the parable of the talents, as saying to him, that had ten; "have thou authoritie over ten cities," but to him, who had five only, "have thou authoritie over five."

And

And now in this brief illustration, that has been given of the doctrine of the text, we are furnished, with some very noble as well as interesting motives, to a resolute discharge of everie moral and christian dutie and a vigorous pursuit of all goodness, in the midst of that formalitie and degeneracie, which so much abounds amongst us. such I mean, as arise from the love of virtue, the love of our countrie, and the love of ourselves. A sense of the amiableness and excellencie of virtue is so deeply implanted in the human heart, that even men of the most corrupt and abandoned principles cannot intirely devest themselves of it. And in minds but tolerably serious and well disposed, there must needs be a much stronger relish for her charms. In an age indeed of general formalitie and corruption there is apt to be, even in the best of characters, such an unhappie mixture of the prevailing temper of the times, that they give us but a comparatively faint and obscure illustration of moral beautie. But let us conceive of a man, in the midst of all this degeneracie, surrounded, on everie side, with the contagion of a polluted world, and of sickening, dying virtue, yet keeping himself “pure and undefiled;”
retaining

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retaining sound and vigorous principles of goodness in his soul, and treading, with alacrity and spirit, the ways of religion; observing the follies and vices of his fellow men and fellow christians, not in order to copie after them, or to encourage himself by them in a less strict and conscientious discharge of his own dutie, but to lament and pitie, and, if possible, to correct them; despising the censures of a giddy, unthinking world, and everie mean opinion, that others may entertain of him, for what they may be apt to call a weak and superstitious zeal; and pursuing, with unsullied innocence, inflexible resolution and undaunted corage, everie measure, that he thinks may be "to the glorie of God," or for the good of mankind; how bright, illustrious, and amiable does the character of the virtuous man appear, when thus cleared and refined, and when the evil examples, with which he is continually surrounded, instead of communicating to it any of their sickly and defiling influence, serve only to render it more conspicuous! Let us then aim at making this great and lovely character our own. Let the temptations arising from the lukewarmness and degeneracie of others, instead of corrupting

rupting our virtue by being complied with, heighten and illustrate its beauties by being resisted and “overcome.” Let us imitate the example of our Lord and master Christ Jesus, who “in the midst of a crooked and “perverse generation was holie, harmless, “undefiled, and separate from sinners,” and, who, notwithstanding the reproaches and calumnies of the most spiteful and malicious enemies, persevered in his glorious and god-like design, even unto death. By being thus conformed to him in the steadfastness and unshaken virtue of his character, we shall have a proportionable likeness to him in the grace and loveliness of it, and may prove happily instrumental, towards inspiring the minds of others with the love of that pietie and virtue, the love and consequent practice of which he came into the world to promote, and which we ourselves profess so highly to esteem. But this leads us to a farther consideration, naturally suggested by what has been said, and which ought to have a very powerful influence towards quickening us to the resolute and vigorous discharge of our dutie, when so many are wholly neglecting, and others so superficially regarding it. I mean the love of our cuntry; that so
truly

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truly great and laudable disposition of mind; the seeds of which have been wisely wrought into the original constitution of our natures, in aid of the general principle of benevolence; and which therefore, it is our duty at all times to cultivate and cherish, but more especially still, in a time of public calamities and alarms. And though the design of those tremendous, awful judgments, that are sometimes inflicted upon a sinful people, is undoubtedly their reformation and amendment; yet is not this the only method in which such a design may in the scheme and order of providence be accomplished. the same gracious purposes may, as we have seen, be effected by the instrumentalities of the upright and undefiled few that remain amongst them? And, if such a chosen number are any where to be found, we may, humbly hope, that God will in judgment remember mercie, and rather execute the counsels of his will by their means, than by the terrors of his avenging rod. And should it not to each of us be more desirable, to have national repentance and public virtue effected by our integritie, by our zeal and diligence in the practice of virtue, than by the judgments of incensed heaven; the calamities

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mities of war, the devastations of the sword, the desolating furie of savage plunderers, and the crueltie and oppression of insulting and tyrannical enemies? what just pretences can we make to a public spirit, and the love of our countrie, if we will not attempt, what we know it is in our power to effect, towards promoting a reformation of manners in it, and by this means averting the execution of that divine vengeance, which otherwise the wisdom of providence may demand to be inflicted upon it; if we will not so much, as “amend our own ways,” cleanse and purifie our own hearts, for the sake of it? who can tell, what great effects may arise from small beginnings, and what an extensive, happie reformation might be the result, would a few only but bethink and exert themselves in time? in this, as well as in everie other work, some must needs be the beginners: and in a cause so glorious, who would not be ambitious of the honor? Animated therefore by these so highly interesting motives, let us do all we can both by our example and by our endeavors to persuade men to a serious consideration of their ways, and of the obligations, which from so manie distinguishing blessings, as those, which we enjoy,

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enjoy, must, of necessitie, arise, to our “ walk-
“ ing before God in righteousness, and per-
“ fecting holiness in his fear ;” to put a stop
to that levitie and voluptuousness, that open
immoralitie and profaneness, on the one
hand, and to that formalitie and mere hypo-
critical profession, on the other, so preva-
lent among us ; and to excite our fellow
countrie men and fellow christians, to a con-
duct worthie of their rational natures, and to
a vigor and alacritie in the practice of reli-
gion, answerable to the privileges of which
they boast, and the profession they are mak-
ing of it? Should our countrie be ruined
and undone, we shall have a share in all its
miseries ; if it be saved, we shall partake in
the deliverance, and in all the blessings, con-
sequent upon it. and however it may fare
with us in these respects, as to which we
cannot from present circumstances make any
certain conclusions ; we shall have the satis-
faction of having done our dutie and acted
our proper part, and may entertain the
gladening, joyful hope of hereafter receiving
the peculiar reward of those, who “ in the
“ midst of a” corrupt and sinful “ generation
“ have shone as lights in the world.” And
this is a third particular pointed out to our
consideration

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consideration by the subject we have been treating on, and containing a most important motive addressed to our self-love, to the “ keeping of our garment clean.” We have seen the peculiar excellencie and worth of such a character, and that the rewards of a future judgment will be dispensed, in exact proportion to the degree of goodness and virtue in everie man’s heart and temper. The transactions too of that august and solemn day, will be carried on in the most open and public view ; agreeably to what our Savior says in the text: “ I will not blot out his name out of the book of life;” but I will *confess* his name *before* “ my father “ and *before* his angels.” and how great the honor of having our names thus resounded with applause in the presence of a listening and attentive world! far greater glorie will it surely be, to have the approbation “ of “ the holie angels and of the spirits of just “ men made perfect,” than to be flattered and admired by some present vain pretenders to uncommon wit and penetration; even to whose contempt we may well be indifferent, should we happen to fall under it for our stedfastness and coragious zeal in the cause of truth and virtue; when we re-

I

flect,

fect, that by it we shall not only gain the esteem and approbation of these exalted angelic spirits, but that “the father of “spirits” himself will be both the witness and the ratifier of that distinguished reward, that shall then be adjudged to our distinguished virtue. Nor is it possible, that any merit of this kind should fail of so glorious a recompence, for want of being observed and taken notice of. Amongst men indeed the pure, untainted integritie of a few particular persons is likely enough to be overlooked amidst a general depravitie. But “God has not eyes of flesh, nor seeth he, “as man sees.” He discerns and “ponders “the ways of men afar off.” And, as it is “him, with whom we have to do,” so, “to him all things are naked and open.” not a thought is there arising in our hearts! “not a word upon our tongues, but, lo, “he knows it altogether.” And, as Christ is to be the deputed agent and representative of God, in the grand solemnities of public, universal judgment, so “he knoweth, what “is in man, and needeth not, that any one “should tell him.” In that important and awful message to the church of Sardis, which we have in this and a preceding discourse, been

been endeavoring to illustrate, he assures them, by the mouth of his holie apostle, that "he knew their works;" who amongst them were only hypocritical and formal professors of religion; who were lukewarm, and wanting in a just and becoming zeal for it; and what were everie man's follies and defects. and, though the number of those, who kept their virtue pure and undefiled, was so exceeding small, yet did it not escape his penetrating and ever watchful eye. For he tells them, "thou hast a few names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments." But what in the strongest manner enforces these reflections, is the consideration of the nature of that happiness, which the virtuous are to enjoy hereafter. This our Savior expresses by "being with him;" "they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthie." And in this manner of speaking it seems plainly intimated, that the happiness of the saints in a future world will, as to the general nature of it, be analagous to that, of which the blessed Jesus himself is possessed. And, if so, it will for certain be of such a kind, as to be everie way perfective of our intelligent, reasonable and moral natures, and con-

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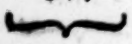

ducing to raise our minds to the sublimest height of improvement in everie thing that is excellent and divine. For undoubtedly the happiness of that glorious being, who is “ the only begotten of the father, the “ brightness and expresse image of his per- “ son,” must needs be of the noblest and most exalted kind. And is it not worth our while to aim at superior degrees in a felicitie like this? will not pre-eminence in a happiness so sublime, abundantly compensate for all the pains we can have taken in fortifying our minds against the temptations of the world, or the influence of its evil examples? But the expression in the text, of “ walk- “ ing with Christ” seems farther to suggest to us, that the happiness of a future world will consist in a state of social converse and intercourse with the blessed Jesus; and if with him, undoubtedly with a glorious multitude of those, who, having been the imitators of his virtue, on earth, shall then be sharing with him in the honors of immortality. And what can give us an higher idea of the heavenly happiness, than to conceive of it, as thus resulting from our union with a society of kindred spirits, made perfect in innocence, knowlege, virtue, and love;

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love; and of which the exalted redeemer himself is the great center and head? shall we not be ambitious of attaining to some high and elevated station in so glorious a communitie, that is to subsist and flourish throughout eternal ages? can we sit down, coolly reflect upon the matter, and then content ourselves with the expectation of being but “scarcely” admitted to a participation in these exalted, heavenly felicities? if not, let us be “stirring up everie gift of God, “that is within us,” in the practice and pursuit of virtue. let it be our stedfast resolution, that, whatsoever others do, we will both love and imitate the Lord our God with all the strength and ardor of our souls. And that neither these, nor the several other interesting considerations, that have now been laid before you, may fail, through the unhappie influence of custom and example, to have their just effect upon your minds, be persuaded seriously to recollect, that the mode and fashion of the world is by far too fluctuating and variable, to be made the measure of conduct to beings endued with but the lowest degree of thought and understanding. Let us consider, how much we must degrade ourselves by following it im-

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plicitly, as if we had no reason, no conscience, no guiding principle of our own. In a word, let us not, even profess religion, merely, because others do the like, but as those, who have upon firm and solid grounds entertained the belief of it; and look upon a strict and conscientious observance of its laws to be the highest glorie of our immortal natures, as well as the brightest ornament and best recommendation of our christian character.

Against

Against the exorbitant Claims of the
CHURCH of ROME.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 20, 1745.

Against the Episcopal Church of the
Church of Rome

A
F. R. M. O. N.

THE HARBOR

OF THE

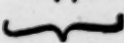
S E R M O N V.

MATTHEW. XVI. 18, 19.

And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

THOSE, who are but ever so little acquainted with the controverſie between proteſtants and the church of Rome, muſt well know, that this paſſage of ſcripture has been conſtantly urged by the advocates of the latter, as carrying in it a ſtrong, undeniable proof of the infallibilitie of the church, and of the ſupremacie of St. Peter,

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with how little reason I shall endeavor to make appear in the following discourse, by a more particular consideration of the several parts of it. The words were occasioned by a declaration, which saint Peter had just been making of his faith in Christ, as the true Messiah and the great prophet of God; “thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.” And it is here proper to be remarked, that the name, Peter, was not given to Simon the apostle, on account of this declaration, but long before; even upon the first interview, that he had with our Savior, as appears from the gospel of St. John, chapter the first, and verse the forty second. And he, “says the evangelist, meaning Andrew, brought him, that is Simon, to Jesus. And, when Jesus beheld him, he said; thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas; which is, by interpretation, a stone.” And this probably on account of the firmness and resolution of his temper. In allusion to this name, that had been thus previously given him, our Savior says to him in the text; “thou art Peter, the same in signification with Cephas, and upon this rock I will build
“ my

“ my church.” The word here rendered, church, denotes in its general signification, any collection, assemblie, or societie of men; and the sense of it in particular places is to be determined, according to the subject spoken of, and the force of other expressions or phrases, that are connected with it. In the nineteenth of Acts and the thirty second verse, Demetrius’s mob is called *ἐκκλησία*; the very same word, that is in our text translated, church. So that there is no peculiar sanctitie in the word itself, notwithstanding all the noise and contention, that there has been in these later ages about it. And though in the passage before us it evidently carries in it a most important meaning, yet that importance does not procede from the signification of the word itself, which is altogether general and indeterminate, but from the appropriative appellation or epithet annexed, my church. And what is Christ’s church or societie, but that societie or bodie of men in all ages and places, who call themselves by his name, and acknowledge him for their head and master? Now, when our Savior says, “ upon this rock I will build my church,” there are, I think, but three possible senses, in which the words can be understood. None
of

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of which will afford the least countenance to the exorbitant claims of the church of Rome. And first, by "this rock" may be meant that confession, which Peter had just before been making of his faith in Christ, as the Messiah and prophet of God. And, according to this interpretation, the sense of the intire clause itself, or of the affirmation contained in it, will be to this effect; as thou art for the resolution and firmness of thy temper called Peter, so that great truth, to which thou hast now been declaring thy assent, may justly be considered, as the "rock," as the great foundation and support, of that societie or kingdom, which I am about to establish in the world. And, if this be the meaning of the words, how clearly do they decide against the above-mentioned claims in asserting, that the prophetic character of Christ so amply justified by the miracles, which he both wrought himself and enabled his apostles to perform, was that, upon which mens regard to him were to be founded, and from which alone everie particular doctrine and injunction of his gospel was to derive at once its importance and its proof? Consequently, so far as we believe or practise any thing out of an implicit reverence

reverence to the dictates of any, who call themselves his disciples, we deviate from that verie principle, which he himself has declared to be the foundation of his religion. And those, who claim any such respect to be paid to their pretendedly infallible dictates, do most arrogantly and blasphemously assume the character of Christ, invade his prerogative, and substitute themselves in his room; in direct and open contradiction to the express assertion of the apostle so exactly parallel to the sense, which has now been given of the words of our Savior in the text, when he affirms, that, “ other foundation can no man lay, than that which is” already “ laid, even Jesus Christ.” It has however, been somewhat differently supposed, that, when our Savior said, “ thou art Peter, and “ upon this rock I will build my church,” he might by laying his hand upon his breast signifie to those, who heard him, that he spake of himself, and with some such intended meaning as this. As I have heretofore given thee the name of Peter or a stone, on account of the steadiness and unshaken corage of thy temper, so I myself may in a still more important sense, be called a rock, as I am, by virtue of my prophetic character,

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character, the sole foundation of that grand communitie or bodie of men, that is hereafter to be denominated from me. In the same manner and sence it is observed in confirmation of this remark, that upon another occasion he says, "destroy this temple," "and in three days I will raise it up;" which the historian immediately informs us, that he spake concerning "the temple of his bodie;" as might easily be perceived by his action and gesture in pronouncing it. This interpretation of that first clause in our text, which we are now attempting to illustrate, is, in effect, the same with that before mentioned, not at all differing from it in the particular sentiment supposed to be intended, but only in the manner of expressing it. But, thirdly, when our Savior says, "upon this rock I will build my church," he may very well be supposed to refer to the person of St. Peter himself. In this sence is the passage understood by many protestant writers; and by all I believe, that are popish. But with how little advantage to that cause will easily be discerned. If we admit this reference in the words, they will naturally implice, that St. Peter being one of the first publishers of the gospel, would, by necessarie

con-

consequence, have the honor of being employed in laying the foundations of a community, that was, in the plan and order of divine providence, intended to rise into a most glorious superstructure, and to spread and dilate itself over the face of the whole world. But this was by no means an honor peculiar to St. Peter. He was not the only one among the apostles, that was concerned in publishing the glad tidings of christianity. The rest had their share both in preaching and in suffering for it. And from this well known fact it appears, that, had any special circumstances, during our Savior's personal ministry and conversation upon earth, given occasion for it, these words of the text might with as much propriety have been applied to any of the rest of the apostles, as to St. Peter in particular. And accordingly we find in the epistles, expressions to the same general purpose, and altogether as forcible, applied to them all without limitation or distinction. "We are built," says St. Paul, upon the *foundation of the apostles*, and prophets, Jesus Christ himself "being the chief corner stone." And again in the same epistle to the Ephesians, "God," he says, gave some, *apostles*; and some, "prophets;

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“ prophets; and some, evangelists; and some,
 “ pastors and teachers; for the perfecting
 “ of the saints, for the work of the ministrie,
 “ for the edifying or the *building* up, of the
 “ bodie of Christ.” Nay, the same writer
 else where makes use of expressions equally
 significant of a like meaning, even, when
 speaking of Timothie, who was not an
 apostle. “ These things write I unto thee,
 “ hoping to come unto thee shortly, but, if I
 “ tarrie long, that thou mayest know, how
 “ thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house
 “ of God, which is the church of the living
 “ God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”
 These words are indeed, urged by the ad-
 vocates for poperie, as strongly proving their
 doctrine of infallibilitie, upon the supposition,
 that the church is here called, “ the pillar
 “ and ground of the truth.” But it has been
 well observed by an able and judicious critic,
 that, as the apostle does in this very passage
 call the church, “ the house of God,” it is
 somewhat hard to conceive, that he should
 in the very same breath, call it “ a pillar;”
 or represent the very same thing, and that
 in the very same period, or sentence of dis-
 course, as being both an house, and the pil-
 lar of that house. He therefore seems very
 justly

justly to consider this phrase, "the pillar and ground of the truth," not as referring to the church, but to Timothy, and the whole passage as an exhortation to acquit himself in the church, as one appointed to be an assertor and maintainer of the truth, and in a manner suitable to that character. See Dr. S. Clarke's XVIII. Sermons, No. x. p. 222, 3. Thus it appears, that even supposing these words, "upon this rock I will build my church," to refer to the person of St. Peter, they afford no manner of ground for ascribing to him any peculiar prerogatives above the rest of the apostles, much less an absolute supremacie over the church universal. But I go on

Secondly, to that part of the text, that next offers itself to our consideration; "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." These words are considered and urged by the defenders of the papal cause, as containing an express promise to the church of infallibilitie in matters of faith. And one of their writers has expressed his sense of it in this syllogistical form, which he is pleased to call "a demonstration." "*The gates of hell*, according to Christ's own words, will never prevail against his church." "But,

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"if

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S E R M. V. “ if she fall into an error against faith ; *the gates of hell prevail against her.* Therefore

“ she cannot fall into an error against faith.”

See a book intituled, *The shortest way to end Disputes about Religion*, in two parts, Pt. I.

§. 1. of C. i. p. 24, 5. But there is a palpable fallacie in this reasoning, which consists in the ambiguity of that phrase, “ errors

“ against faith.” If by such errors be meant

errors, that amount to a denial of the propheticall character and divine mission of

Christ; it will then be allowed, that the

church cannot fall into any such errors. but

what is this more than saying, that a bodie

of men cannot believe in Christ as the pro-

phet of God, and at the same time denie

him to be so. And can such a ridiculous,

trifling proposition, as this, be a sufficient

foundation, upon which to raise that mightie

superstructure of infallibilitie, as claimed by

the church of Rome? But, if by “ errors

“ against faith” be meant errors against any

particular doctrines of christianitie main-

tained by persons still adhering to this gene-

ral truth; that Christ is the messiah and pro-

phet of God, and that everie principle, that

appears upon inquirie to have been inculcated

by him, is of divine authoritie, and it be

asserted,

asserted, that in this sense the church of Christ cannot err, we are then to consider, what is to be understood by the church of Christ. If we interpret this expression in the true and proper sense of it, as denoting the whole bodie of professing christians throughout the world, it is plain, that some particular members of that bodie may err in such points, without at all forfeiting their character as members of it; to which their general acknowledgement of the divine mission of Christ, and their professing to receive, under the sanction of it, everie doctrine, which they believe to have been taught by him, must give them an undoubted right. But, if by the church of Christ, be meant any particular and separated bodie of professing christians, who call themselves the only true church of Christ, and it be intended to assert in this argument, that they are infallible in all their doctrines and decisions, it may surely be expected, that such claims should be supported by very strong and powerful evidence. Any bodie of christians may advance them. But whoever they be, that take upon them to do so, should certainly give some better proof of the justness of their pretensions, than their own mere word and

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positive affirmation. The apostles of Christ were far from arrogating to themselves any such "dominion," as this, over men's "faith," claiming only to be "helpers of" our "joy," and expecting no farther regards to be paid to them, as divine messengers to the world, than they proved themselves to be so by their miraculous works. Nay, our blessed Savior himself did not expect, that men should look upon him, as the prophet of God, and the infallible teacher and instructor of mankind, merely because he himself said, that he was so; but grounds his claim upon the "works," which the Father had enabled him to do. "If, says he, "I do not the works of my father, believe "me not; but, if I do, though ye believe "not me, believe the works, that you may "know and believe, that the father is in me, "and I in him." And again, "believest "thou not, that I am in the father, and the "father in me? the words, that I speak unto "you, I speak not of myself; but the father, "who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Our faith in Christ is evidently founded upon that miraculous proof, which he gave of his divine mission: and independently of this it would not be a faith justifiable or rational.

And

And must it not then be manifestly absurd, to follow implicitly the dictates of any bodie of men, who can bring no such evidence of their infallibilitie; and merely because they are the only men, that have assurance enough to claim it? A claim, which, as it is absolutely unsupported by any external evidence, so is it diametrically opposite to those many passages of scripture, in which all men without distinction are called upon to use their own judgment and reason in examining into the truth and doctrines of religion. "search the scriptures, says our Savior himself to the Jews; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me;" and again, "why even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?" Exactly in the same strain is it, that the apostles addressed themselves to the primitive believers in the gospel. "I speak," such is the language of St. Paul to the church of Corinth, "I speak as unto wise men, judge what I say." "prove all things, hold fast, that which is good," is what he recommends to the christian Thessalonians in general. And to the very same purpose is that exhortation given by St. John to the christian bodie at large; "beloved, believe

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“not everie spirit; but try the spirits, whether they are of God.” These are plain, explicit passages, that cannot, one would imagine, be misunderstood by any. And they contain such a confutation of the authoritative claims of the church of Rome, as no art, no sophistrie, can possibly evade. So that the simplest and most illiterate christian, while he has the bible in his hands, and these texts are in his bible, is effectually armed against the subtlest devices of jesuitical craft and policie, and may easily by a few plain, uncontroverted passages of scripture, baffle everie pretence to that infallibilitie, which is the strong-hold of poperie. Since nothing surely can be more apparent, than that a scheme of religion, which thus expressly asserts the right of private judgment, and enjoins the universal use of it, cannot at the same time countenance or abet pretences to infallibilitie in its professors, either singly or in any united bodie of them; but must by these very assertions and injunctions absolutely condemn them. But still it will be asked; what is the true meaning of this expression, or promise in the text; “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Now the word here rendered, hell, properly signifies

signifies the invifible world, as has been very pertinently obferved by commentators, in reference to this paffage. And by “the gates” of the invifible world is evidently meant death, by which it is, that we make our entrance upon it. So that the plain intention of the promise is, that, tho’ the apoftles were mortal, and tho’ fome of them fhould even undergo an untimely death for the fake of that religion, which in this character they were to publifh to mankind, yet that it fhould not die with them, but be tranfmitted thro’ a long fucceffion of ages to the lateft period of the world. And it is evident, that whilft there continues upon earth a focietie of men, acknowledging Jesus Chrift to be the great prophet of God, receiving him for their instructor and their Lord, and embracing everie principle, that appears to them to be a real doctrine of his gofpel, this promise will be fully verified and made good, notwithstanding any differences, that upon this or that particular article of the christian faith may be fubfifting.

The next thing in relation to the paffage of fcripture now under confideration, is to inquire into the meaning of that declaration made, or affurance given unto Peter; “and

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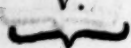
“ I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” Now this phrase, the kingdom of heaven, is well known to be frequently made use of in scripture, for denoting the gospel dispensation. And by giving to any one the keys of this kingdom, is very naturally understood, his being appointed to be in the number of those, who should be the first publishers of the gospel, and thus open a way for the universal reception of it. And this was very true of St. Peter, but not of him only; our Savior having given his commission to all his apostles alike, to go and preach the “ glad tidings” of it to “ everie creature.” But it appears from the second and tenth chapters of the book of Acts, that St. Peter was the first of all the apostles, who preached christianitie to the Jews, and the first likewise, who published it among the Gentiles. The words therefore may, not without some degree of probabilitie, be supposed to refer to that particular part assigned to him, in the measures of providence, of being the first among the first preachers of the gospel. And let this be looked upon, as his peculiar privilege and honor. Yet it is evidently an honor, in which he could have no successors.

So

So that, supposing the bishops of Rome in other respects to have derived a succession from him, it is plain, that their claim to any peculiar prerogative or dominion, cannot receive the least countenance or support from this peculiaritie in his character. It is said indeed, that "the keys" are used in scripture to denote power and authoritie. And frequently they are so; yet is not this always the sense, in which, as occuring in the sacred language, the terms are to be understood. They are not for instance, thus to be interpreted in those words of our Savior; "wo unto you lawyers," or teachers of the mosaic law; "for ye have taken away the key of knowlege, ye entered not in yourselves, and them, that were entering in, you hindered." These teachers of the law had not renounced their authoritie to teach, but continued to act as the public and instituted instructors of the Jewish nation. But they did not act in that capacitie fairly and impartially. They "took away the key of knowlege;" that is, not the right or power of instructing; for this they adhered to, as their own privilege. But the means of knowlege is what they are here charged with "taking away." They did
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not take the proper method of leading men into an acquaintance with the truth. In like manner our Savior, by saying to Peter in the text, that he should have "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," assures him, that he should be a signal instrument of providence in diffusing the knowlege of the gospel amongst mankind. But should we even allow, that by these terms are conveyed to us the idea of power and authoritie, it was not surely such a power over the church of Christ, as amounted to the absolute disposal of its blessings and privileges, as he should think proper, with which it was intended here to invest him. This is the high prerogative of our Savior alone, who is "head over all things to the church:" not surely the power of determining the future and final state of christians; for Christ "has the keys of hell;" or, as we should by all means read the passage, of the invisible world "and of death." It can therefore, agreeably to the interpretation already assigned, only mean a power and authoritie to declare and publish the gospel to the world, and to make an opening for the general reception of it amongst mankind. And in this too, the other apostles were "partakers together
 I " with

“with him,” as may farther appear from what shall be offered, in the

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Fourth place, towards elucidating that clause of the text, with which the whole is concluded; “whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” By binding, in this passage, we may most naturally understand the declaring, what duties men should under the gospel-dispensation, be obliged or bound to practise; and by loosing, the declaring, what obligations, which, though before binding upon them, they would by virtue of that dispensation, be released from. Such, for example, as the ceremonial institutions of the jewish law. And, when it is said, “whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven,” what can we suppose to be the meaning of it, but this; that, by the pouring out of the holy spirit upon St. Peter, he should be led into the knowlege of all christian truth; so that the several religious duties and principles, which he should inculcate, should have all the authoritie of heaven on their side, and that this should be made evident

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evident by the miracles he should be enabled to perform in confirmation of them? But this was so far from being a privilege peculiar to St. Peter, that the very same thing is by our Savior himself declared concerning all the apostles in general. "Whatsoever," he says, Matthew xviii. 18, and addressing himself to them all without distinction; "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." What foundation is there then for ascribing any peculiar prerogatives or authoritie to St. Peter? does not our Savior plainly tell his apostles, that they were "all" of them "brethren?" and does it not appear from their being alike commissioned to preach the gospel, and alike endued with the power of working miracles in confirmation of it, that in realitie they were so? But even allowing St. Peter to have been invested with any such peculiar privileges, as we have been speaking of, allowing too, that the bishops of Rome are his undoubted successors in that see, will it from hence follow, that they are his successors in everie thing else? nay, what undeniable evidence, have we, that they are not? for, where
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are the extraordinarie and miraculous proofs of their extraordinarie claims? if the decrees and determinations of St. Peter himself could not justly have been admitted, without the evidence of miracles in attestation of them, shall those, who pretend to succede him in power and dominion over the church, be allowed this claim, though destitute of any such evidence in support of it; especially, when they take upon them, as they do, to "bind" those things upon men's consciences; those pilgrimages, penances, bulls, excommunications and the like, to which this apostle, with whose authoritie they claim to be invested, was altogether a stranger? what admirable successors these of St. Peter; they, strangers to his heavenly credentials and miraculous powers, on the one hand, and he as little acquainted with their absurd doctrines and idle superstitions, on the other! If a dormant and unexercised authoritie might be admitted, without that sufficiency of evidence, which, in the present instance, we have been insisting upon; yet surely when it exerts itself in such a manner, as this, when it thus pretends to give law to the world, and to "lay" those "heavie burdens upon men's shoulders," which neither we "nor
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may justly suspend our regards to it, till such evidence appears. Thus have I endeavored to give you a brief explication of that passage of scripture, which I read to you at the begining of our discourse; and from what has been delivered,

First, does it not evidently appear, as the conclusion of this argument, that the church of Rome is indeed, what she is so often said to be, the most antichristian church in the world? We have seen, that in whatever possible sense we understand these words; “upon this rock I will build my church,” they plainly amount to thus much; that Christ himself is the foundation of christianitie, that all the peculiar doctrines of it, derive their truth and authoritie from his prophetic character and mission, that the first preachers and publishers of the gospel acted only, as they were commissioned and instructed by him, and are no farther to be regarded as teachers in religion, than as his deputed agents and authorised ministers in diffusing the knowlege of it throughout the world; to whom he himself bore witness, in that character, by “signs and wonders, by “miracles and divers gifts of the holie “ghost;”

“ghost;” in short, that he is the sole king in his church. But has not the church of Rome avowed an infallibilitie equal to that of the apostles, nay, equal to that of Christ himself, without giving any such proof of its authoritie to do so? what is this, but to set up another authoritie, in opposition to his, another rule of faith, instead of the sole, authentic records of genuine christianitie, contained in the new testament? what did Mahomet more? is building our faith upon the authoritie of the church, and receiving a doctrine as true, because the church believes it, the same thing, as being “builded upon “the foundation of the apostles and prophets, “Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner “stone?” is this the same with “calling no “man master upon earth, but him alone?” is it not as much a contradiction to any professions of this sort, as it would be to build our faith upon the authoritie of Mahomet, or to believe a doctrine, because it is taught in the Coran? These claims to infallibilitie they pretend indeed to support by the authoritie of the new testament. But this is, in my opinion, so far from lessening the arrogance of such claims, that the attempting thus to establish, under the shelter of its authoritie, a rule of faith, that shall supersede

supersede it, does but render them so much the more anti-christian still.

In the second place, we need not wonder, that the leaders in the church of Rome, should be so unwilling to have the scriptures come under the perusal and free examination of those, they call the laitie, and should be so industrious, as they are known to be, in deterring from such an indiscriminate and general use of them. Infallibilitie is the great idol of the papists. It is this, that, with so much earnestness they contend for; well knowing, that the many absurdities, by which they have corrupted the system of christianitie, are not to be supported without it. The New Testament everie where condemns them, and reason abhors them. Nor could even this method have been so effectual, as it has proved, had it not been for fire and fagot, crusades, and inquisitions. The text indeed, which we have now been discoursing on, is constantly urged as one main pillar and support of this doctrine of infallibilitie, whenever its advocates are pleased to recur to the milder methods of scripture-proof. We have seen, however, that it gives no manner of countenance to any such claim. It has likewise been observed, that all those passages of sacred writ,
which

which assert the right, and demand the exercise of private judgment in matters of religion, are so many express declarations against it. For let councils dictate, let popes domineer and anathematize, let jesuits ever so long quibble and chicanery, it can never be made to appear, that "prove all things," means, shut your eyes and follow the church blindfold; that, when our Savior said, "why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right," he meant why will ye not be persuaded to believe without examination, and without evidence, and to receive implicitly doctrines, that are contrarie to both sense and reason; and that, when he exhorts his disciples to "search the scriptures," his intention was to say; never be at the trouble of looking into them yourselves, but humbly acquiesce in the sense, which others so much wiser and better, than you, have already agreed to put upon them. Common understandings not yet accustomed to see, thro' the medium of authority, will be apt to find quite another meaning in such passages as these.

Thirdly, let us be protestants, not only by principle and profession, but in practice too. For any set of men to make their own

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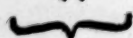
opinions and dictates the standard of faith to others, is such an affront offered to the reason of those, whom they thus pretend to guide, and such a bold attempt upon one of the unalienable and most valuable rights of men, that it ought with the utmost disdain to be resented. And it is this assuming, dictating spirit in the church of Rome, that has so justly raised in our minds a strong, and I hope, invincible aversion to every measure, that can be formed for bringing us again within the influence and power of it. But it is not the name of poperie merely, that we profess to hate. And the thing we mean by it, may, alas! often prevail under one more specious. God knows, with what bitterness and uncharitableness, with what pride, scorn and bigotry, with what furie, wrath and malice, even protestants have harassed and persecuted one another; to the scandal of their name, and to the boast and triumph of the common and avowed enemies of libertie. Thanks be to God, they now seem better to understand their own principles. But it is to be feared, there may still be some remains of the former spirit; such as an undue reverence for partie-schemes, impatience of contradiction, indolence in examining,

examining, unconcernedness about the truth, yet, not without an ill opinion of others, that differ from us in matters of religious belief, on account of that difference alone, and dictated merely by our own pride and self-conceit, and not so much as by a mistaken zeal for the puritie and honor of religion itself. Let it therefore be our aim to deuest our spirits of everie thing of this kind: let us read the scriptures with a sincere desire of knowing the “truth, as it is in Jesus;” and not with the view only of being confirmed in the “traditions of our fathers,” or in the opinions of this or that particular communitie among christians. Whilst we pitie those deluded votaries of the church of Rome, who suffer themselves to be led implicitly by the dictates of others, let us not as much deserve, on that very account, to be pitied by them. And let us with all modestie, candor, and charitie, allow others the same freedom of speculation upon the subject of religion, which we claim for ourselves, advancing no “railing accusation” against any man, but living in peace and amitie with all. And in the

Fourth place, let us be truly thankful, that God, in the course of his providence, has

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so faithfully and mercifully accomplished his promise, that “the gates of hell should not prevail against the church” and kingdom of the Messiah. Strong was the opposition, and violent the persecutions raised against christianitie at its first introduction into the world. for the sake of it what numbers of its primitive professors, became the untimely victims of mortalitie! but their sufferings, even unto death, were so far from impeding the progress of it, or blasting its infant-honors, that it flourished by this very means the more. And we now live in the possession of those glorious privileges, which they have transmited to us by their blood. With what ardent gratitude to heaven, should we recollect likewise the successive disappointment of those designs, which have been so often formed against what we believe to be the purest and most uncorrupted profession of the christian doctrine; and which, in consequence of these repeated favors shewn us by the Almighty, is now so happily subsisting among ourselves? Once and again have its enemies “risen up” against us; and once and again has the Lord “confounded their devices and put them to open shame.” And,

To conclude, let us chearfully hope and trust, that he, who has “ delivered us out of “ the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of “ the bear, will” also “ deliver us out of “ the hand of this Philistine,” who is now disturbing our peace and meditating our ruin. And let us endeavor to express our gratitude for those mercies, which we have so long enjoyed, and the sincerest contrition for our long abuse of them, by rendering them for the future more subservient to those grand purposes of moral life and temper, which they are ultimately designed to promote. Let us consider, that, “ what- “ soever Christ and his apostles have bound “ on earth, is bound in heaven,” that all their doctrines and injunctions, are so many special significations of the divine will to man; and that, whose soever “ sins they re- “ mit, are remitted” in heaven, “ and,” that “ whose soever sins they retain, they are “ retained;” that is, that the terms of acceptance laid down in the gospel are those, by which the great father of angels and of men, the sovereign Lord and governor of universal nature, will himself judge of us both now and hereafter, and according to which, the public sentence to be in solemn man-

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ner pronounced by "that man," Christ Jesus, whom he has "ordained to judge "the" assembled "world in righteousness," will be decreed. And in cordial compliance with the so obvious tenor of these conditions, let us in all things be walking worthie of our high and holie profession. let us not content ourselves with believing in Jesus Christ, as the prophet and "son of the living "God; but let us also keep his word" and imitate his example; that thus, instead of incurring the peculiar and aggravated condemnation of those, who boasting themselves to be "children of the day," have nevertheless "walked" in "darkness," we may, thro' the infinite mercies of "his father and our "father, of his God, and our God," be admitted to share with him ere long in the blessings of eternitie.

Characteristicks of a GENUINE and of a
MISTAKEN ZEAL.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 27, 1745.

Characteristics of a Gentleman and of a
Mistaken Neighbour.

A
SERMON

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 12, 1794.

SERMON VI.

MATTHEW XVI. 21, 22, 23.

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying; be it far from the Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter; get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things, that be of God, but those, that be of men.

IN the preceding words our Lord had been assuring his apostles, that the foundations of that kingdom or community, which he came into the world to erect, should



should be laid so deep and permanent, that no opposition would be able to prevail against or overthrow it; and that saint Peter, not exclusive of, but as acting in conjunction with, the rest of the apostles, should have the honor of being, under him, one of the immediate founders and principal supporters of it. But, at the same time, well knowing, how strongly even the apostles themselves were prepossessed with the notion of the Messiah's being a temporal prince, and of how much importance it was to convince them of their error in this respect, and to lead them into juster notions concerning the design of his appearance in the world, he proceeds, in the words of our text, to inform them, that, what he had just been saying, could not possibly be understood as referring to any worldly pomp and grandeur, that should characterise and distinguish his kingdom, but only to the firmness and stabilitie of it; since it was in realitie of such a nature, as not only to be consistent with, but even to require, in order to its establishment among mankind, his own sufferings and death. Upon this St. Peter full of prejudices and expectations, with which a prediction of this sort seemed to be no way reconcilable,

and

and forgetting the declaration, which he himself had but just before been making of his faith in him, as the Son of God; which ought undoubtedly to have determined him, without scruple or hesitation to acquiesce in every thing, that he asserted concerning the nature of his own kingdom, and the manner in which it was to be established in the world, “took him and rebuked,” that is, expostulated with him, saying; “be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.” In this behaviour there might be a mixture of something amiable and generous. St. Peter, throughout the whole history of his life, appears to have been a man of a warm heart; and he had, no doubt, a strong affection for our Lord, and a very high opinion of his character and worth. The very thought therefore of his being thus injuriously and ignominiously treated by his countrymen, might, without his reflecting upon that disappointment of his own hopes, which would of course follow upon it, excite in his mind a just and laudable resentment. Yet from the manner, in which our Savior replies to him, it should seem, that his national prejudices and the sanguine expectations he had founded upon them, in relation to

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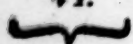
to his own advancement in the world, occasioned in his mind, not only the greatest surprise and astonishment at hearing a declaration, from the mouth of the divine master himself, so directly contrarie to them, but likewise a dissatisfaction and disgust at the mortification his own aspiring views must meet with, should things fall out accordingly; and that from hence, in a great measure, proceeded this rash and hasty expostulation.

In consequence of these prejudices and expectations, and of what our Savior had just before been declaring, which he probably understood as intended to encourage them, saint Peter had no doubt been forming to himself very splendid images of that grandeur and dignitie, in which his master was to appear as the “king of the Jews,” and as the conqueror and Lord of nations; and of the distinguished share, which he himself expected to have in the triumphs of his reign. But how to reconcile those sufferings and persecutions, which our Savior at the same time informs him, he was to undergo, with these gay and flattering appearances, he was utterly at a loss; and therefore immediately breaks out into a warm and eager deprecation of what the Savior had so solemnly declared, should

should certainly come to pass. In reple to which our Lord assures him, that by this unseasonable and ill-judged expostulation he was so far from acting the part of a real and faithful friend, as he might imagine, that had he been his adversarie, according to the original meaning of the word, Satan, and as some chuse here to render it, he could not have uttered any thing more agreeable to that character. Our Lord well knew, that he was to be “made perfect through sufferings;” and that it was in consequence of his “obedience unto death, even the death of the cross,” that “God had purposed highly to exalt him, and give him a name above everie name.” Had he therefore declined these sufferings, he must needs have forfeited this glorious reward. And yet this is what his disciple Peter was rashly and inadvertently persuading him to. Or we may with others suppose, that by Satan is here meaped that arch-rebel against God, who is usually so denominated in the scriptures. And, upon this interpretation, the term as here in particular applied, will denote, that St. Peter was so far from expressing himself in this expostulation, like one, that wished well to the gospel-kingdom, that his words would

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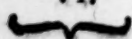
would better have fitted the mouth of the devil himself, that greatest enemy of the gospel; to whom nothing could have been more welcome, than such an obstruction to its establishment in the world, as must necessarily have been consequent upon our Savior's declining the sufferings he underwent. He might therefore justly; add, "thou art an offence;" or, as the word here rendered offence strictly signifies, a stumbling block "unto me." That is what thou hast now been saying is, in its meaning and purport, though far from being so in thy intention, or in the effects it has upon me, a temptation thrown in my way to desert the cause of God, of truth, and virtue, and to undermine that very kingdom, I came into the world to erect. Our Lord in the next words points out the only thing, that could be alleged in excuse, for Peter's remonstrating, in the manner he did, against his sufferings and death; namely, that it proceeded not in fact from any real enmity he had to the success of the gospel kingdom, but from the mistaken notions he had entertained concerning it. "Thou savorest not the things, that be of God, but those that be of men." Thou hast not, it is as if he had said, taken thine ideas

ideas of my kingdom from any just conceptions of the moral government of God, from the tendencie of my doctrine and preaching, from the apparent design of my coming into the world, or from what the prophets of old have declared concerning it; but from the prevailing prejudices of thy countrie, and from that worldly pomp and grandeur, so vainly expected under the Messiah, to which mankind in general are so fondly addicted, and which thine own heart is but too much fet upon.

Having thus briefly illustrated the passage, I shall employ the remainder of my discourse in considering those useful reflections, that naturally arise from it. And

First, they afford us one instance, out of many others of the like kind, of that admirable prudence and discretion, with which our blessed Lord both spake and acted. The twelve apostles he had singled out, from among the rest of his disciples, to be the principal and immediate instruments of spreading the knowlege of his religion throughout the world, after his own decease, resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven. And, though they were in due time, by the pouring out of the holy spirit,

as

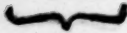
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as well as by our Savior's personal conversation and instruction, perfectly well qualified for this great work, yet at the time of their being chosen, and for a good while after, they labored under the common prejudices of the Jewish nation, and were very sanguine in their expectations of a temporal Messiah. And in that part of his conversation, which is now before us, by what easy and pleasing steps does he endeavor to eradicate these prejudices, and to lead them into better apprehensions concerning the nature of his kingdom, or the design of his appearance among mankind? Having spoken of the strong, immovable foundations, upon which this kingdom was to be established, in terms, which to them, already prepossessed with it, might seem to favor the notion of a temporal Messiahship, he immediately subjoins an express and clear prophesie of the persecution, sufferings, and death, which he himself was to undergo. From whence they might easily and of themselves infer, that his kingdom, whatever else might be the nature and design of it, could not possibly consist in outward splendor and magnificence. And by this means their minds would be gradually prepared for entertaining those refined and exalted

exalted notions of it, which they themselves did afterwards so strenuously and invariably inculcate, and for conceiving of it, as consisting “in righteousness, peace, and joy; “in the Holy Ghost,” and in the empire and command of truth and conscience, of reason and virtue, over passion, appetite, and interest. By thus intermingling and connecting the assurances of the stabilitie and success of his kingdom, with the prediction of his own sufferings and death, he not only took the most effectual method to remove their prejudices, but also to prevent their being too much shocked at the foreseen disappointment of their once sanguine hopes, by leading them to perceive, that, though they must not expect to shine in worldly grandeur and magnificence, or to abound in wealth and riches, but must rather count upon the same contempt and sufferings, which he himself was to meet with, they should, notwithstanding, have a far greater honor conferred upon them, than any that could arise from worldly pomp and distinctions; that is, of being preachers of righteousness, and of establishing in the world a religion, which was intended and most wisely calculated for restoring to the human race at

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present

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present the inestimable blessings of knowledge and truth, of peace and order, and qualifying the immortal mind for a sublime and godlike happiness hereafter. Thus wisely and prudently did our Savior combat their prejudices and errors. And in this, as well as in the several other particulars of his example, it is not enough, that we applaud and admire. We are also bound to imitate. To contend for the pure and uncorrupted religion of Jesus, and to oppose steadfastly and with zeal those mistaken apprehensions, that men have fallen into concerning it, is highly commendable. Nay, it must needs be the incumbent duty of every one, who calls himself his disciple and follower. But then this is not to be done by noisy and boisterous exclamation, but by patiently and gradually inculcating those principles and facts, by which the error may be most easily, and with the greatest certainty, discovered. And as men are extremely apt to imagine, that the very essence and life of all religion is connected with their particular systems of opinion, and that it cannot possibly subsist without them; and as we can have but little hope, so long as they continue in that notion, and indeed, ought not to desire, to persuade them

them of the falsehood of such principles, it must be highly proper, that we endeavor to convince them, that all the grand purposes of religion and moralitie will be, at least as well, if not much better, answered by what we are contending for, as the truth. Such, we see, was the method, which our Savior took with his apostles. So much were they prejudiced in favor of worldly grandeur and pre-eminence to be under the reign of the Messiah enjoyed, that they would, no doubt, when they heard of the sufferings and ignominious death of our Savior, who assumed that character, and whom they had hitherto followed, as being the person who had really a right to it, be ready to imagine, that the kingdom of God was not yet come; and that, notwithstanding the opinion they had entertained concerning him, he was not, after all, the person, by whom Israel should be redeemed. And, therefore, at the same time that he foretells his own sufferings and death, he assures them of the stabilitie and success of his kingdom, and of its triumph over all opposition, and that these two things were far from being so inconsistent or contradictorie, as they might be inclined to apprehend. but,

Secondly, in that part of sacred historie, which is now before us, we may observe, how strangely prejudice and tumultuous passions set men at variance with their own avowed principles. Who would have thought that saint Peter, who had but just before been making so clear and full a declaration of his faith in Christ, as the “son of the living God, as the great messenger and prophet of the most high, should take upon him to expostulate with, and contradict him in the manner we see he did. It might surely have been expected, that he should intirely have acquiesced in, and most readily have assented to, whatever came from the mouth of him, whom, he himself had but immediately before been acknowleging, as a “teacher sent “from God;” how much soever it might have interfered with his own pre-conceived opinions. But alas, he had his head and his heart full of temporal grandeur and dominion. Long had he been accustomed to look upon the expected dispensation of the Messiah, as consisting in regal splendor and greatness. And as he himself had been one of the first adherents of our Savior, and was now among the immediate attendants upon his ministrie, he had, no doubt, invested himself,

himself, in imagination and prospect, with some of the highest honors and distinctions in his court. Nor could he bear with patience any thing, that contradicted his prejudices, and blasted his hopes, even though uttered by one, whom he himself acknowledged to be the "son of the living God." and had Peter been the only instance of such inconsistent conduct, it had been well. But has he not been too closely imitated, in this respect, by numbers? For example; the protestant religion is confessedly founded upon the manifest, invariable and universal right of private judgment. When any protestants therefore, who are themselves laying claim to that right, and acting upon the supposition of its unlimited extent, attempt to disturb others in the enjoyment of it, when they set up their own opinions, as the standard of faith, which others must either conform to, or incur censure, reproaches, hatred, and ill treatment, for taking the libertie to dissent; what is this, but acting in direct contrarietie to those very maxims, which they themselves by being protestants avow. Yet thus in many cases do vanitie and self-conceit get the better of principle and sober judgment. Again; the other grand

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truth, upon which the protestant religion is founded, is, that Christ and his apostles are the only authoritative and infallible teachers of christianitie, and that it is by them, and by them only, that we are to be determined in forming our notion of its principles. And it is upon this foundation, that we reject the decisions and traditions of the church of Rome. But, if we receive our faith implicitly, from any other bodie of men, or from our fore-fathers, or from any single person, do we not act in as manifest contradiction to this principle, as if we received it from the church of Rome, or from the pope? do we not by thus servilely following the judgment of others, as much oppugn this maxim of our religion, as they can do the former by arrogantly setting up and consecrating their own? And must we not in either case, act in as direct contradiction to our own avowed principles, as Peter did, when immediately after acknowleging Jesus Christ to be "the son of the living God," he "began to rebuke him?"

Thirdly. We see in the instance before us, what is the fatal tendencie, and what may be the pernicious effects of great zeal, when operating under the influence of false
and

and erroneous principles. Saint Peter was a man of a warm and sanguine temper, but as yet quite mistaken in his apprehensions concerning the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and the design of his appearance in the world. And by this unhappy concurrence of warmth in temper with error of judgment was he led, under the notion of zeal for the kingdom of Christ, to declare against and oppose that, which is in realitie the great basis and support of it. For it is evident, that our Savior could not have complied with the dissuasions of this forward and hastie disciple, or have evaded those sufferings and persecutions, that are here predicted, without renouncing and giving up the christian religion and depriving the world for ever of its invaluable blessings. Such indeed was his perfect and invincible virtue, that he could not be induced by any considerations of this nature, even though suggested by a companion and a friend, to desert in any respect whatsoever the cause he had so gloriously undertaken. Yet still the tendencie of the suggestion itself was the same. And it is so represented by our Lord in his replie to it. "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence, or a stumbling block,

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“unto me.” And very unhappily for the christian world, there are not wanting innumerable instances, in which a like zeal for mistaken notions of christianitie has not only had the same tendencie, but actually produced, and is still known to be attended with, consequences the most mischievous. What, for example, is a zeal for poperie? Is not that system of religion we so denominate, the most enormous corruption of the gospel? may it not with the exactest propriety be said of it, that “it favors not the “things that be of God, but those that be of “men?” are not worldly policie and ambition the foundations, upon which it is builded? And yet, by how great a part of christians is it embraced; and by the generalitie of these, how tenaciously and fondly adhered to? But what, I ask, is a zeal for poperie? is it not a zeal for ignorance, for flaverie in bodie, mind, and fortune? for a pretendedly religious scheme of doctrines and institutions, that are in fact subversive of all true principles of religion, whether natural or specially reveled? what is it, but a zeal for everie thing that tends to debase the rational nature of man, to sink it beneath its native dignitie, and utterly to indispose

dispose and incapacitate it for all its most sublime and exalted occupations? With respect to persons acting only in a private sphere, a zeal for such corrupt and enslaving principles must be highly pernicious and dishonorable. Since the greater their attachment to them, the faster are they binding on their own chains, and so much the stronger fetters of ignorance and bondage are they preparing for their children after them. And where this blind and bigoted adherence to such perverse, debasing principles, becomes the general character of those individuals, that constitute and form a nation, it must render a national recoverie to greater light and puritie in matters of religion next to impossible. But the fatal and mischievous effects of a headstrong and impetuous zeal, actuated by ignorance and a misguided judgment, will appear in the strongest point of view, when considered as attended with power and a superioritie over others. Let us suppose, for instance---Thanks be to God, that we are only viewing the scene in thought and imagination: and this it is highly proper, that we should do, in order to excite in our minds a becoming indignation against the attempts of those, who would make it a
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real one. But let us, I say, suppose, that a bigoted and zealous papist should become possessed of the throne of these realms; what confusion and disorder, what povertie, oppression and persecution; what deplorable ignorance, what dreadful slavery and bondage would he introduce amongst us? Nay, of such a destructive deadly nature is the religion of Rome, such a natural antipathie does it carry in it to the peace and welfare both of particular persons and of societie in general, that even a small degree of zeal for it, when attended with power and authoritie, may prove the source of vast and tremendous mischief. For an example to this purpose, we need go no farther back than the reign of our own Charles the second. It is now an unquestioned fact, which his brother and successor was pleased to discover, after his death, that this prince had, in his exile, solemnly abjured the protestant religion, and declared himself a papist. This however he endeavored, during his life time, to conceal from his subjects here. and consistently with that design he could not persecute all denominations of protestants indiscriminately. That he should act under so much disguise, can be little wondered at, when we consider, that he

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was a man of too licentious principles to be much influenced by any maxims of religious belief, and had a heart so lightly affected with religion of any sort. yet what little he had, was poperie. and it shewed itself by a continued series of enmitie towards the protestant dissenters. Throughout the whole course of his reign, they were always studiously included under the general name of non-conformists, that so under color of restraining the growth of poperie, all manner of difficulties and hardships, might be laid upon them. No less than two thousand of their faithful and conscientious ministers were ejected by the act of uniformitie; and thus their people deprived of their labors, and they of their livelihood. This was followed by the five-mile act. The substance of which was, “that no non-conformist minister, of what denomination soever, should dwell or come, unless upon the road, within five miles of any corporation or any other place, where they had been ministers, or had preached after the act of oblivion, unless they first took the following oath.” “I do swear, that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up arms against the king, and that I do abhor the traiterous
“ position

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“ position of taking up arms by his autho-
 “ ritie against his person, or against those
 “ that are commissioned by him and acting
 “ in pursuance of such commissions, and
 “ that I will not at any time endeavor an al-
 “ teration in government, either in church
 “ or state.” It was not long after, that a
 former act against conventicles was, with
 some additional severities, revived. The
 substance of which was : “ that, if any per-
 “ sons upwards of sixteen, should be pre-
 “ sent at any assemblie, conventicle, or
 “ meeting, under color or pretence, of any
 “ exercise of religion in any other manner,
 “ than according to the liturgie or practice
 “ of the church of England, where there
 “ were five persons or more, besides those
 “ of the household, in such case, the of-
 “ fenders were to pay five pounds for the
 “ first offence, and ten for the second, un-
 “ der the penaltie of imprisonment, and for
 “ the third, to pay an hundred pounds, or
 “ be transported for seven years. And the
 “ preachers and teachers in any such meet-
 “ ings were to forfeit twentie pounds for
 “ the first, and fortie for the second offence.
 “ And lastly, those, who suffered any such con-
 “ venticles in their houses, barns, yards, &c.
 “ were

“ were likewise to forfeit twentie pounds.” And “ this act,” we are told, “ was so rigorously executed in London, and put things in such disorder, that many of the trading men began to talk of removing with their effects, over to Holland.” Such was the conduct of a prince, who was only a concealed papist. What then might have been expected, had he been as great a bigot as he was a debauchee? This was in fact the character of his brother the duke of York, afterwards king James the second. Who accordingly was no sooner come to the throne, than he entered upon the most violent, but yet determined, measures both against the church of England and the protestant dissenters from it, and for rooting up the protestant religion and all the precious remains of libertie among us. We see then, what we must expect from a pretender to our crown, brought up in all the corrupt and enslaving principles of poperie, should he succede in his present designs against us, (which God of his infinite mercie forbid) even though he should, not be one of the most bigoted of papists. And yet from his having lived so long within the verge of the pontificate, we have the greatest reason for believing,

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believing, that he is. So that should he and his abetors ever prevail against us, we could look for nothing else, but all the most dreadful calamities, that a furious and mad zeal actuated by the worst of principles, and by a blind submission to a tyrannical, cruel, and impious hierarchie, could possibly bring upon us. Thus I have endeavored briefly to point out to you, what is the fatal tendencie, and by real instances upon record, to exemplify, what may be the dreadful effects of great zeal, exerting itself under the influence of false and erroneous principles; which was the third observation suggested to us by the passage, that we are at present considering. At the same time it shews us with equal force and clearness, in the

Fourth place, of how much importance, it is, that we establish in our minds right and just notions of the christian religion: otherwise we may, even by our zeal in its behalf, be defeating its design, and promoting an interest directly contrarie to it, and to that happiness and peace of mankind, with a view to which it was introduced. It must therefore, be a matter of the highest concern, that our zeal for the gospel be “a zeal according to knowlege,” and inspired by

by accurate and worthie notions of its nature and end. To this purpose let us studie it carefully and impartially, and read the new testament with the greatest seriousness and attention. For it is there and there only; that the true and uncorrupted gospel of Jesus is to be learned, and not in creeds, confessions, and catechisms of merely human composition. The writings of others and the explications they have given of the christian scheme, may, and ought to be, consulted, in order to facilitate our inquiries into the nature of it. But it is by the scripture alone, that their particular notions and opinions are to be finally examined. This is the only standard of christian faith. And no farther than they speak according to this “rule can they have any light in them.” And when by diligent studie and inquire we have formed our notions of the gospel, according to the real design and purpose of heaven, in the introduction of it amongst mankind, and the views that are given of it in the original and genuine records of its publication: when we have thus learned to conceive of it, not as a religion of form and ceremonies, not as a system of mere speculation and theorie, not as intended to
advance

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advance its professors to worldly grandeur and dignitie, or to invest any particular set of men with power and pre-eminence, or with privileges and emoluments, above the rest of their fellow christians; but, as a “ doctrine, according to godliness,” intended to “ purifie the heart by faith and to perfect “ men in good works,” to inspire the minds and warm the souls of all who receive it, with the principles of a disinterested and fervent benevolence towards all men, and thus to promote the most extensive and the highest good of mankind both here and in futuritie: finally, when we have fixed in our minds just apprehensions of its particular doctrines and institutions, as in the best manner calculated in subserviencie to these important ends, and as being no farther advantageous to those, who believe or complie with them, than, as they are in fact conducive to such purposes: When, I say, we have done this, when we have thus learned to “ favor the “ things that be of God, and not those, that “ be of men,” and have contracted a just taste and relish for the sublime and noble purposes of the gospel-dispensation, then let us call up all the zeal and ardor of our minds in defence of its truths, and in endeavoring to

to promote the observance of its institutions and laws. In a cause so worthie of our attention and deserving of our warmest pursuit, and when our views are thus clear and distinct, thus fixed and deliberate, thus rational and exalted, we shall pursue them with a pleasure both satisfying and refined, and may look upon ourselves, with inexpressible complacencie and delight, as acting in glorious confederacie with the "father of spirits," with his only begotten son, Christ Jesus, with his holie apostles, with the "noble armie of martyrs," and "with the spirits of just men made perfect." And from a zeal thus founded and supported, thus actuated and enflamed, may not some important consequences be naturally expected to arise? might we not hope, should it ever take place in the hearts of any considerable number of christian professors, that much would be done towards restoring christianitie to its original and primitive simplicitie, towards delivering the christian world from the ignominie of implicit faith and blind submission of the understanding, on the one hand, and putting a stop, at the same time, to the contempt and ridicule, with which religion is treated on the other; and reviving

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among us that spirit of universal love and charitie, which is the grand foundation and source of happiness both private and social; and which therefore it must needs have been the great end of our holie religion to enforce? But whether we should be more or less successful in any such designs, whatever vexations and disappointments we may meet with in the prosecution of them, that may break in upon our present satisfaction or tranquillitie, we shall be sure to “lay up for ourselves treasures” of honor and of happiness in that future world, where “everie man” shall be rewarded, not according to the success of his endeavors, but to the laudable intention of them. And this leads us to a

Fifth observation, naturally founded upon the text; and that is, how greatly we ought to admire, and how careful we should be to imitate, that steady and invincible benevolence of our Savior, which would not suffer him, upon any considerations whatsoever, to desert the cause of truth and virtue, of religion and the public good. The scriptures assure us, that he “was in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without sin.” And in the passage before us, we have an express and lively instance of it. A love of ease, and
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the views of ambition and worldly grandeur are two of the most common, most powerful, and most successful temptations, by which men are induced to renounce their integritie and abandon the pursuit of virtue. Nor are they ever more likely to prevail against the better judgment and temper of our own minds, than, when suggested by our intimate companions or beloved friends; either thro' a false tenderness, or from any interested and private views. In the case before us, all these circumstances were concurring. Our blessed Lord informs his apostles, that he "must go up to Jerusalem, and there suffer many things of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, and be put to death." Upon which St. Peter, his disciple, his companion and his friend, who could not bear to think, that his master should be thus ungratefully, cruelly, and ignominiously treated, and whose passions had been not a little elevated by the prospect of that temporal grandeur and dignitie, with which such a declaration, as this, seemed directly to interfere, breaks out into a warm and eager expostulation; "be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee;" intimating his hopes, that he would better consult his



own ease and safetie, and not expose himself unnecessarily to such hardships and persecutions; but rather, effectually prevent and put a stop to them, by declaring himself the temporal prince of the jewish nation. This, considering how general an expectation was then prevalent of the Messiah's appearing under that character, and how much the people were disposed to conclude from the wonderful works performed amongst them by our Savior, that he was the person raised up of God for that purpose, he might probably have done with success. And indeed St. John expressly assures us, that "they would have taken him by force, and have made him a king." But with how noble and generous a disdain does he reject the thought; saying to the person, that suggested it; "get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence to me!" knowing, that he was sent into the world upon a design far more interesting and important; namely, to enlighten it with the knowledge of truth, to form men's hearts into a likeness to Deitie, to induce them to a forsaking of their iniquities, and to the practice of sincere and universal virtue, and thus to fit and prepare them for immortal happiness; with what
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stedfast and unshaken zeal, with what undaunted corage, does he pursue this glorious cause, and set himself to encounter that opposition and those persecutions, which he was to meet with for the sake of it? how great and godlike does he in these transactions appear! how worthie of our highest reverence! how deserving of our imitation! accordingly this is an example, which is in the scripture itself frequently proposed, as that, which we are under the strictest obligations to conform to, when circumstances are such, that we must, either suffer for the truth, or desert it. “Consider him,” says the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, “that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” And St. Peter assures us, that “hereunto were *we* called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.” Animated therefore by this most amiable and illustrious pattern, let us begin with arming our hearts and minds by cultivating everie rational and manly, everie generous and christian principle. Or in the lively and expressive

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language of the apostle, let us “ put on the
“ whole armour of God---having our loins
“ girt about with truth, and having on the
“ breast plate of righteousness, and our feet
“ shod with the preparation of the gospel of
“ peace; above all, taking the shield of faith
“ ---and the helmet of salvation, and the
“ sword of the spirit;” that so, when liber-
tie, which is the cause of God, when the
protestant religion, which is the cause of
virtue, truth, and christianitie, implore our
aid, we may be able to quit ourselves like
men, and instead of sinking under danger,
thro’ a supine and indolent love of ease, or
fear of sufferings, may bravely encounter
and resist it, undismayed either by the terrors
of war or even the flames of martyrdom; nor
“ counting our lives, dear unto us,” so that
we may but “ finish our course with the joy”
of those, who in imitation of our great re-
deemer, die for truth, for virtue, and for the
public good.

SERMON VII

NATIONAL DELIVERANCES
Commemorated:

IN A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

NOVEMBER 3, 1745.

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E R M O N
IN A
COMMUNION

Preached at BARRICAN

NOVEMBER 17TH

IN

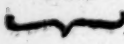
S E R M O N VII.

P S A L M XLIV. I.

*We have heard with our ears, o God, our
fathers have told us, what work thou didst
in their days, in the times of old.*

WE are now within the very near
views of an anniverfarie, which
the providence of God has fig-
nalized and made remarkable by two events
of the moft interesting confequence to thefe
kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland : the
difappointment in the firft place, of an infer-
nally dreadful plot, that was formed for de-
stroying the king and both houfes of parlia-
ment by gun-powder, which was to have been
effected on the fifth of November, and by
the fo feafonable discoverie of which, in the
merciful order of divine providence, thefe
kingdoms

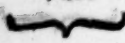
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kingdoms were rescued from poperie, slavery and ruin; and afterwards the landing of king William the third, which was likewise on that day; and to which event is under God, to be imputed a repeted deliverance of these nations from that most intolerable yoke of tyrannie and oppression, the prospect of which was at that time so alarming, as to fill the hearts of all, who loved and rejoiced in British libertie, with the deepest consternation. These surely are events, which, with others of the same general tendencie, it must be natural for us to be often recollecting; but especially at such a time, as this, when we are threatened with the very same evils, and when consequently we stand in need of everie thing, that can tend to lead us into a just acknowledgement or lively sense of the wise and good providence of Almighty God, and the firmest dependance upon it, with respect to the future welfare and prosperitie of our countrie. I shall therefore take this opportunitie of putting you in mind of those many signal mercies shewn to this nation; which, though indeed well known, are, it is to be feared, but too little considered among us, and of pointing out to you, in what manner we may most properly and usefully commemorate them.

First,

First, I say, I will briefly remind you of those many signal mercies, which God has shewn unto this nation, and deliverances, that have in our behalf, and thro' his abundant goodness, been accomplished. Till the time of the reformation, the people of this land were perhaps the most intirely devoted to the see of Rome, and the most stupidly attached to all the absurd doctrines and tenets of poperie, of any nation in christendom. our princes were hector'd and cajoled by domineering popes and haughtie nuncios. our land was over-run with friars, monks, abbots, and ecclesiastics of everie kind, that at once devoured the wealth, blinded the understanding, and corrupted the morals of the people. And the nation in general was, as to life and fortune, reason and conscience, in a state of the most abject and ignominious slavery. There were indeed amongst us, long before Luther appeared in the world, or the reformation took place in these kingdoms, those who bore a noble testimonie against the usurpation and absurdities of the church of Rome. The famous Wickliffe of immortal memorie, a learned man, and professor of divinitie in the universitie of Oxford, opposed and publickly declared against manie popish errors; such as the tyrannie

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tyrannie of the church, the abuse of indulgences, praying to saints, worshipping of images, and transubstantiation; and took a great deal of pains to have an English version of the bible. Among many followers he had some of great rank and distinction, such as, the duke of Lancaster, lord Piercie, and lord Cobham, one of the first martyrs for the cause of religion in this nation. And tho' Wickliffe himself, together with those, among our ancestors, who adhered to his opinions, were indeed discountenanced and persecuted by the government, they became however very happily successful in sowing the seeds of better knowlege. And to them we owe it, that there were at the time of our separation from the church of Rome in the reign of Henry the eighth, those, who stood up for it, from a principle of judgment and conscience, at the time when the king himself labored to effect it upon motives, that had in them a very considerable mixture at least of ambition, covetousness, and revenge. God was pleased, however to make use of the royal influence, though exerted upon this occasion, not from the best of principles, to favor the designs of those, who acted upon great and purely generous motives, and to

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give

give the reformation such a firm footing in our land, that its enemies have never yet been able to overthrow it. Many attempts of this kind have indeed been made; and the long interval between the first introduction of the reformed religion in these nations, and the glorious revolution by king William, was almost one continued struggle against the adversaries of it. In the reign of queen Marie, poperie even again assumed the throne. And notwithstanding her own solemn assurances, given by her in person to the men of Suffolk, who had first signalized themselves in her favor, and her declaration in council, that she would use no force upon conscience in matters of religion, she entered upon the most bloodie and violently persecuting measures against all the friends of the reformation. And those very men, to whom she had made her first promise of libertie of conscience, were the first in feeling the dire effects of her religious rage and crueltie. Neither meanes of birth, on the one hand, nor high rank and distinction in life, on the other; nay, not even loyaltie itself could be any securitie against her merciless and unrelenting vengeance. And so much was her heart hardened against all the feelings of humanitie,

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so intirely had she even devested herself of the softness peculiar to her sex, that she expressly forbid to “pray” for those, who were put to death, as the victims of her crueltie, or even to say; “God help them.” In this short reign of five years and a few months, it was generally computed, that there were burned, “five bishops, one and twentie divines, eight gentlemen, eighty-four artificers, one hundred husbandmen, servants, and laborers, twentie-six wives, twentie widows, nine unmarried women, two boys, and two infants.” And, had her reign been longer, what effectual methods she might have taken wholly to extirpate the protestant religion, who can tell? but God was pleased to cut her off in the midst of her days; and to make way for the coming of the princess Elizabeth to the throne; who had been wonderfully preserved by providence from falling a sacrifice to the rage of her persecuting enemies; and by whose long and glorious reign, so much additional strength and securitie was given to the reformation and the protestant cause. That she was able to do this, was not owing to any want of malice or evil designs in her enemies, but to the good providence of God
in

in defending her against them. For it is well known, at what a vast expence the king of Spain fitted out a fleet against her, which, in presumptuous confidence of success, was called the Invincible Armada, and by which it was designed to make an intire conquest of her kingdom, and to reduce us once more to that dreadful state of bondage and miserie, out of which we had so very lately emerged. But God, who, whenever he pleases, "maketh the devices of the "people of none effect," confounded all his measures. Within the compass of a few months, this vast project, which took up three years preparation, was, by the prudence and magnanimitie of the queen, the valor and good conduct of her officers, assisted by winds so favorable to us and so adverse to our enemies, intirely defeated and brought to nought. Nor was this the only project formed for her destruction. As she was so strenuous a defender of the protestant cause, the enemies of it were as zealous in their attempts against her. But through the merciful and mightie protection of providence, she lived to carrie on the great designs of the reformation, and died in peace and a good old age. In the next reign it was,
that

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that the hellish and execrable design of blowing up the parliament house, when the lords and commons were attending the king upon the throne, was so near being executed. Though there were but few persons concerned in it, and those not men of the greatest note or influence; yet was it in itself a design beyond all imagination shocking, and tremendous. Had it taken effect, it must have involved the strength and flower of the nation in instantaneous and absolute destruction. And the inconceivable consternation this would have occasioned amongst all ranks and orders of men amongst us, would probably have put it out of their power to enter into any cool and deliberate measures for their own safety; and have laid them open to all the malice and furie of their enemies: which would then have been at liberty to exert itself without the least check or controule. But God was pleased in his abundant goodness, and in the unsearchable wisdom of his providence, to discover and frustrate the amazing, and till then unheard of, wickedness, just when it was to have been put in execution. Whether by the relentings of one of the conspirators, in behalf of his friend, or by informations received

ceived from the court of France, is not material. In the two next reigns verie formidable attempts were made against our civil liberties and the rights of conscience. But in the succeeding one the prince upon the throne was a professed and bigoted papist. our religion and liberties were openly and avowedly attacked; and both the armie and the courts of judicature made use of to favor and support the designs, that were carrying on against us. And thus did bigotry, malice, and power, by their united influence, seem to threaten us with a speedy and absolute destruction. But God had much greater mercie in store for us, than from such a melancholie situation of things might have been expected. He raised up the prince of Orange, of glorious and ever to be blessed memorie, for our deliverance, by whose seasonable landing, the black and destructive designs of a popish king and a popish ministrie were wholly defeated; and that without bloodshed or slaughter. And on some accounts the national crisis, at the landing of the prince of Orange, may be considered as having been more formidable, than even at the time of the gun-powder plot. For "in that other instance," as seems to have been

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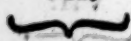
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judiciously observed upon this head, “ poperie threatened the throne ;” whereas in the attempt by this more recent event so effectually defeated, “ it actually invaded it ;” or, as it might have been with still greater propriety said, was in actual possession of it ; “ in the one, the design to introduce poperie “ was carried on by poperie without power ; “ in the other by poperie and power ; in the “ one in a corner ; in the other openly, in “ the sun ; in the one by a few secret plotters, “ in the other by a great body of men, and “ a standing armie ; in the one the garrisons “ and armie were in protestant hands ; in “ the other in the hands of papists.” See the life of Mr. James Owen, p. 62. Yet by the great deliverer of our nation was so happy a revolution effected, as fixed our liberties both civil and religious upon the strongest and most lasting foundation ; and notwithstanding all the plots and contrivances, that were formed even against his person, he lived to establish the Hanover succession ; in consequence of which we now possess all those national rights and liberties, by which we are so eminently distinguished among the nations of the earth. But let us go on to consider in the

Second

Second place, with what temper of mind it is, that we should recollect these and the many other instances of favor shewn us, in the course of that divine providence, which ruleth over all the kingdoms of the world. And

First, if these be indeed the favors of a divine providence, we ought to do it with the highest thankfulness to God on account of them. and do we pretend to question this? In that brief review, that we have just been taking of those great deliverances, that have been accomplished in our behalf, as a people, there appears to have been nothing, that was strictly speaking miraculous; nothing but what may justly be looked upon as having been the effect of natural and secondarie causes. For as to what some of king James's abject and cringing flatterers were pleased to say of his being inspired by the Holie Ghost with the true interpretation of the letter sent to my lord Monteagle, it was flatterie merely, and therefore not deserving of our regard. I say then, that there is not in this account any thing, that is properly speaking miraculous. But is there therefore the less of providence? Far be it from us to imagine so. For what is the course and order of nature; but the established method of divine procedure



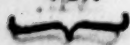
cedure and government? God therefore we are to regard, as the great moving and efficient cause, who only does, who only can give energie to those that are secundarie and natural; and which are indeed nothing else, but that connection and chain of events, which he originally planned out for effecting the grand purposes of his kingdom and providence. And if, as both scripture and the best philosophie assure us, “not a sparrow falleth
“to the ground without our heavenly father,
“if there be not a hair of our heads,” but what “is numbered;” much less can we imagine, without imputing to the all-wise God such a degree of follie, as even a man of common understanding would be ashamed of; the attending, namely, to slighter concerns alone, and the neglecting such, as are in the nature of them far more momentous; much less, I say, can we imagine, that the lives of princes, the success of battles, and the events of war, upon which the interests of nations, the revolutions of empires and kingdoms, and the state of religion among mankind are so nearly, so necessarily depending, should not be under his inspection, guidance, and influence. We may talk of the chances of war, the fate of nations, and the great,
unaccountable

unaccountable effects of seemingly inconsiderable causes. And so far, as we mean by such language, any thing coming to pass, without our knowlege of its immediate cause, or contrarie to the seeming probabilitie of apparent ones, it is well; but, if we mean by it the occurence of any such events without the direction and providence of God, it is very absurd. And, if in this sense some of the events of war and revolutions in states and kingdoms came to pass by chance, and others by providence, how must our devotions be confounded, and the pietie of the good man's heart, who would not willingly mock his maker, be non-plus'd and at a loss, unable, as on this supposition he must be, with any tolerable degree of exactness to determine, which he is to ascribe to chance, and which to providence? But the scripture has sufficiently guarded against any such confusion as this, by assuring us, that "the lot is cast into the lap, but that the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord?" that, "there is no evil in the citie," and therefore undoubtedly no good, but the Lord has "done it," that "wisdom and might," all the boasted wisdom and power of man, "are his;" that "he changeth the times and the seasons," that "he removeth kings and setteth up

“kings;” that “he giveth wisdom to the
“wise, and knowledge to him, that knoweth
“understanding.” To this sovereign ruler
therefore let us with grateful hearts ascribe
it, that the evil designs, which our enemies
have, for such a long succession of years,
been forming against us, have hitherto been
so happily disappointed; nay even made to
heighten our national felicitie, by giving a
firmer establishment and securitie to the pro-
testant cause, than, according to merely human
probabilitie, could otherwise have been ef-
fected. “Not unto us, o Lord, not unto
“us; not unto the prowess and valor, not
to the wisdom and prudence of our ancestors,
but unto thy power and mercie operating by
their instrumentalitie, be the praise! And
in order to animate our hearts into a becom-
ing zeal and fervor in these devout and grate-
ful acknowledgements, let us recollect, how
great, how important, how inestimable are
those blessings, which in consequence of
these providential deliverances we enjoy.
No less than that libertie, without which,
life is a burden and a miserie; and which
the wise and brave in all ages have thought
to be cheaply purchased for posteritie, even
by the loss of their own lives and fortunes,
and those of thousands more; the free and
unrestrained

unrestrained exercise of our reason, that chief and principal glorie of our natures; the quiet and unconfined studie of the scriptures, those lively oracles of God and fountains of divine truth: and in a word, the amplest and best-adapted means for the improvement of our minds in that knowlege and virtue, which must ever constitute their chief ornament and felicitie. But we ought

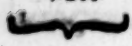
Secondly, to commemorate these deliverances, which God has wrought out for us, with a firm trust and confidence in his protection and mercie for the future. That universal providence and government of God, which is the foundation of thankfulness for these deliverances "of old," is equally so for our intire and absolute dependance upon his wisdom and goodness, in relation to succeeding times. In these signal events we have so many instances in fact, of what is indeed demonstrable upon the general principles of reason alone, that God is able to save and to deliver us from whatever designs even the most inveterate and formidable enmitie can project against us. And such facts occuring so conspicuously in the historie of our own nation and countrie, are apt to strike more forcibly and strongly upon the

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mind, than abstracted, philosophic argument alone. They are, however, admirably well adapted to enforce the convictions arising from it. If ever there was "a work of darkness," the design, that was laid for destroying the king and both houses of parliament by the gun-powder plot, was certainly of the kind. The conspirators acted in secret and under ground, and imagined, "that no eye had seen them." Yet we find, how vain it is for men to think of "hiding themselves in such darkness, as that God shall not see them; who has not eyes of flesh; neither seeth he, as man seeth." He brought their horrid iniquity to light, and laid it open even to the view of man. Or, if ever human strength and power could have prevailed against the merciful designs of providence, those attempts, which were baffled and brought to nought at the revolution, must have succeeded; supported, as they were by the supreme magistracy, and the whole armed force of the nation. But, "when the Lord of hosts has purposed, who can annul it? when his hand is stretched out, who shall turn it back?" In this almighty sovereign power, connected, as we know it to be, with a wisdom unerring, and

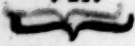
and a goodness that is unchangeable and absolute, let us then humbly confide. This dependence upon God ought not indeed to suspend our attention to the apparently necessary means of our own safety and defence, but, on the contrary, to animate and invigorate us in the use of them. And in regular and well disposed tempers it will naturally have this effect, by keeping the mind in a sedate and quiet frame, by inspiring it with courage and resolution, and maintaining its liberty of thought and action. And wherever there is such an inward and well conducted dependence upon the universal and all directing providence of God, it will not fail of expressing itself by fervent prayer and humble supplication before his throne; which, as it is the natural effect of such a temper, will likewise happily tend to cherish and promote it.

Thirdly, we ought to commemorate these great deliverances, which God has wrought out for us, with the sincerest pity and compassion, towards those, who are yet laboring under that dreadful "yoke" of "bondage," from which we ourselves have been so mercifully rescued. whatever aversion we may justly cherish against the principles and doctrines

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trines of poperie, we ought to have none against the persons of papists. "Love your
"enemies, bless them, who curse you, do
"good to them, who hate you, and pray for
"them, who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children
"of your father, who is in heaven: for he
"maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on
"the good, and sendeth rain on the just and
"on the unjust;" such is the divine precept of our Savior, so exactly agreeable to the natural dictates and sentiments of humanitie. If then we meet with any, that are under the unhappie influence of popish superstition, let us endeavor by mild and rational arguments, and "in the spirit" of love and meekness, to give them better instructions; "if God peradventure may" grant "them" conviction "to the acknowledgement of the
"truth." In distant nations and foreign countries, what numbers are there so blinded and infatuated by the superstitions of poperie, as not to see their unhappiness, in being enslaved to them; whilst others, though well enough convinced of the amazing and monstrous absurditie of its doctrines, yet dare not make open profession of such convictions, or, having corage enough to do it, are laboring
under

under the severest hardships and persecutions on that account? With respect to these, we can do little more than offer up to heaven our affectionate and sympathizing prayers in their behalf. but this let us do with a willing and readie mind, ardently supplicating, that the God and “father of the spirits of all “flesh,” the sovereign Lord and ruler of nations, would, in the measures of his merciful providence, assert the cause of religion, truth, and virtue in the world, and deliver not only such, in popish countries, who are “longing for his salvation,” from that anti-christian power that has so long “lorded it “over God’s heritage;” but even those, who are so deplorably sunk in ignorance and superstition, as not to see, that they want it. Thus shall we be cherishing in our breasts that benevolent temper and disposition, which forms us into the nearest resemblance to the mind and character of Deity itself, and which will afford us those real and sublime satisfactions, that will best compensate for the sorrows of our heart, when reflecting upon the insolent usurpation, maintained in so many intire nations and kingdoms of the world over the rights, libertie, understanding and consciences of mankind. And how happily

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happily likewise will it dispose us to hearken to with pleasure, and, if possible, to second by our endeavors, any methods, that may in the order of divine providence be pointed out for their redemption? With what inconceivable delight and triumph will a heart thus previously disposed by indulging the soft and generous feelings of humanitie, welcome and rejoice in those future events of it, by which some mightie tyrant of the earth shall be humbled, made to relent, and reduced to sentiments of reason, moderation, and equitie, or some effectual blow given to the lawless power of the "man of sin," or some other "door of" deliverance opened for those, who are now the captives of tyrannie and superstition? who would not prepare himself, by taking some pains with his own heart, for such a joy as this, even though the events, that must occasion it, are supposed to be only probable, or even no more than barely possible? with what shame and indignation may we well look back upon our conduct, should the happy scene indeed, present itself, and we, through the stupiditie and indifference of our minds, or the rancor and bitterness of spirit, which we may have indulged, find ourselves incapable

pable of being in any high degree pleased and delighted with it! The same tenderness and humanitie will lead us to commemorate our national deliverances, with the utmost abhorrence, in the

Fourth place, of that persecuting and malignant spirit, that has so constantly appeared in the conduct of those enemies, out of whose hands we have been so often rescued. We see in the various and distant periods of our own historie, how in different shapes it triumphed, not only over the common sentiments of humanitie, but even over female tendernefs itself. in queen Marie's days it kindled the dreadful flames of martyrdom. in queen Elisabeth's, it prompted to an iniquitous and desperate invasion. in king James the first's, it dictated to human hearts such an horrid and detestable villanie, as might well have suted the character of the blackest, infernal fiend, and at which even the consciences of some of the conspirators themselves were at first shocked and terrified, till by consulting with some of their more villainous priests, they were effectually hardened against all the future remonstrances of averse and indignant nature. in that of James the second, it trampled, with unrelenting

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ing furie upon law and justice. Nay, so much do the unnatural principles of poperie dispose men to delight in the spirit of persecution, that its votaries can sometimes please themselves even with the imaginarie and farce-like exercise of it. For of such a nature surely was the bull, which pope Sixtus the Fifth thundered out against queen Elisabeth at the time of the Spanish invasion, absolving her subjects from their oath of allegiance, and bestowing her kingdoms upon the first, that should seize them; which could not hurt the most insignificant person belonging to them; nor have engaged king Philip, so harmless and impotent a thing is a papal bull, to have fitted out a single ship for the expedition, which he had before resolved upon, from the more powerful motives of his own bigotry and ambition. how dreadfully must human nature be perverted, when men can thus amuse themselves in mimicking acts of oppression and iniquitie, not finding it in their power to be more effectually concerned in them! And what can more directly contradict the spirit of christianitie, which teacheth, “as much as

“ in us lies, to live peaceably with all men,”
and to “owe no man any thing, but to love

“one another?” or what be a deeper grief of heart to those, who understand and justly value its genuine and intrinsic excellencies, than to see its sacred, venerable name abused to the countenancing of a spirit so malignant? But still farther in the

Fifth place, should we not commemorate the many national deliverances, which God has wrought out for us, with a resolution of acting in a manner, that shall be most truly corresponding to those religious principles, which, in consequence of them, we have so happily imbibed? As we reject the doctrine of the pope’s supremacie and the churches infallibilitie, let us be consistent in “calling
“no man master upon earth.” For it is plain, that to make any other mere man whatsoever the guide of my faith, and infallible standard of my sentiments, is just the same absurditie as to make the pope so. And be he who he will, that I thus blindly and implicitly follow, that man is, properly speaking, a pope to me. As we reject the doctrine of transubstantiation, on account of its glaring absurditie, let us not maintain any thing equally absurd, as the matter of our own faith but addict ourselves to such an impartial studie and investigation of the truth, as, that our religion
may

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may be, in everie respect, a rational and well grounded principle. As we esteem it, in profession at least, so great a privilege, no longer to have the bible locked up from our use, let us not lock it up from ourselves, either by neglecting to read it at all, or by reading it under the power of prejudice. As we detest the popish principle of persecution, let us take care, that we do not, in our own practice, so much as border upon it. But farther,

Sixthly, whilst we commemorate in the manner, that has now been hinted at, those national deliverances, which have in so much mercie been accomplished in our behalf, let us be humbling ourselves for the little improvement we have hitherto made of those privileges, which have been the fruit of them. "Are there not with us, even with us, sins against the Lord our God?" and must not all the privileges we boast, be considered as so many high aggravations of them? what little care have we taken to cultivate, to exercise, and to improve those rational powers, with which God has indued us, in subserviencie to the noblest purposes of pietie and virtue, and for the exertion and worthiest employment of which, we enjoy
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so many rich and singular advantages? where is that warm and ardent love of God, so naturally to be expected from persons, who have all those additional illustrations of his perfections and goodness, that arise from a knowlege of the scriptures, and an acquaintance with the glorious scheme of redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ? where that tender and affectionate concern for the welfare and happiness of our christian brethren, so frequently, so forcibly inculcated in those sacred pages we profess so highly to venerate? where that zeal for the interests of christianitie, which might naturally be supposed to flow from such peculiar advantages and opportunities, as are by us enjoyed, for being acquainted with its superlative excellencies? what has our freedom of inquirie or juster sentiments of things produced? any answerable correctness in heart and manners? have we learned by these to regulate and adjust our passions, to beautifie and adorn our conduct by the shining and exemplarie graces of a christian life? alas, it is sadly to be feared, we have but little thought of applying our better knowlege in the principles of the gospel to any such purposes. and yet where can lie its worth and value, but in being

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subservient to them? and what just matter, to us, of shame, remorse and condemnation will it be, should any of those, who have lived amidst all the darkness, flaverie, and superstition of poperie, appear, after all, to have excelled us in that virtue, that likeness to God, and that love to man, which it was the ultimate design of this most holy, christian religion to promote? let us then endeavor to shew the sinceritie of our sorrow for our past transgressions, by making a better improvement of our religious privileges for the time, that is to come. By being protestants we enjoy the unspeakable benefit of having free access to the word of God, let us then improve it aright, by forming a more exact and intimate acquaintance with the genuine principles of christianitie, and by applying the motives, which they so amply suggest to that purpose, to the invigorating of our own hearts in the practice of our christian dutie. As we attend upon the worship of God, rescued from the incumbrances of Romish fopperie and superstition, and administred in such a manner, as to be addressed, not to the senses alone, but to the understanding and to the ingenuous affections of our natures; what does this call for, but a greater care to
 excel

excel in virtue, by these peculiar means of advancing in it, which we are so happy as to enjoy, and to let the increasing puritie of our hearts correspond to this stricter puritie and refinement of our outward worship? Or what can all our greater light, all our boasted simplicitie of worship and discipline, avail us, if our hearts and lives nevertheless are as much defiled with the stains and impurities of sin, as those of others? And now in the

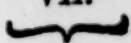
Last place, let us be resolute and active in the defence of those national liberties, rights and privileges, that have, by so many signal blessings of providence, been hitherto secured to us. let us cultivate in our breasts that warm and ardent love of truth, of libertie, and of our countrie, as may animate us, should the natural occasion present itself, to a manly and coragious exertion of ourselves in their defence. let us do our utmost to promote a heartie and indissoluble union among all denominations of protestants; a union of temper and affections, how impossible forever, may be that of judgment and opinion. And let us, so far as our abilities and influence can severally extend, be heartily concurring in everie public measure set on foot for our

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common safetie and weal. Never let it be said, that the liberties so bravely contended for by our fore-fathers, were tamely given up by their pusillanimous and degenerate off-spring. let not that ardent and heroic love of truth, which neither the flames of persecution, nor the terrors of authoritie could subdue in them, ever be suffered among ourselves to sink into base lukewarmness and indifference. Let us dread the thought, that, through our negligence and want of zeal in so glorious a cause, we should at length make a forfeiture to heaven of those pretious rights and liberties, which they at so dear a rate procured for us. How can we better express the sense we have of the value of these blessings, or our gratitude to heaven for the possession of them, than by appearing thus warm and resolute in defending them? or, wholly destitute of such a zeal, with what consistencie can we pretend, either to value or be thankful for them? In a word, let us so demean ourselves, not only during the present scene of national alarm and danger, but in the whole of our future conduct, as members of this great communitie, as that everie succeeding generation of Britons may

may have the same honorable opinion of us, which we are so fond of entertaining, and with so much justice, of our illustrious forefathers, and that in the language of the prophet, even “all nations may call us blessed, “and we be a delightfom land.”

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may have the same honorable opinion of us
which we are so fond of entertaining, and
with so much justice, of our illustrious fore-
fathers, and that in the language of the pro-
phet, even "all nations may call us blessed."
and we be a delightful land.

RELIGIOUS GRATITUDE for NATIONAL
DELIVERANCES.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

OCTOBER 9, 1746.

Being the Day of Public Thanksgiving for the Suppres-
sion of the late REBELLION.

—Multi sæpe honores diis immortalibus iusti habiti sunt, ac
debiti; sed profectò iustiores nunquam.

CICER. in CATIL. ORAT. III.

RELIGIOUS GRATITUDE FOR NATURAL
DELIVERANCES

S E R M O N

Preached at FAREHAM

October 1832

Being the 1st of 10th Sermon
delivered at the late FAREHAM

—Meditate upon the power of the
delivered, and the power of the
delivered, and the power of the
delivered, and the power of the

S E R M O N VIII.

P S A L M CVII. 1, 2.

*O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good:
for his mercie endureth for ever. Let the
redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath
redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*

IT is somewhat difficult to determine, S E R M.
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} whether men are less affected by the mercies, or by the severitie of heaven. The several instances in both kinds seem to pass before us, like the flying arrow, no sooner seen, than presently out of sight. We are at first something alarmed by its awful judgments, and gratefully pleased, it may be, with the tokens of its benignitie; but we think no more of either; unless it be to make them the mere amusements of a transient conversation, when other subjects fail us.

And

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And many of us, it is to be feared, may have almost forgotten; I mean, as to any serious, cordial, or affecting sense of it, that we of this nation were so lately in danger, and so lately delivered from it. It was therefore, I think, very happily ordered, that the day of our public thanks-givings should be deferred to some distance of time from that joyful event, which so naturally demands them. At first the noveltie of this great deliverance could not but of itself alone, without the aid of any particular solemnitie, strongly engage our attention and open our hearts to the soft and warm impressions of gratitude. And now, that we have had, I fear, more than time enough to cool and grow forgetful, we are very seasonably called upon to the appointed services of this day; by which, as our attention to the several particulars of this so recent and inestimable blessing, by indulgent heaven bestowed upon us, cannot but be revived, so, I hope, the grateful feelings and pious resolutions of our minds, if any such were at first happily indulged, will be renewed and strengthened. I have endeavored during the time of our late alarms, once and again to remind you of the "voice of God" in them,

them, and of the improvement which we ought to make of them. With what effect I know not; but I think I can truly say, with an upright and fair intention. And now God has put a “song” of joy and of thanks-giving into our “mouths” by the late signal and decisive victorie, gained over rebellious subjects, confederated with foreign enemies, in a desperate attack upon all that is dear to us, either as Britons, men, or christians. And to me it is assigned, to lay before you at this time some considerations futed to the solemnities of the day. I shall not upon this occasion, assume the province of the politician, neither thinking it by any means agreeable to the design of our meeting together in such a place as this, nor judging myself at all qualified for it; but shall crave your attention, while I point out to you, such other reflections; as do, in my apprehension, so much better become the character, I appear in, of a christian preacher. And it will be

My first business, to lead you to a just and grateful acknowlegment of Almighty God, as the author of that deliverance, which we are now commemorating. It is this only, that can distinguish our joy from
that

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that of the profane and atheistic libertine; who, with all his folly, is not yet become so stupid, as not to be sensible of the happiness of living under a mild and free government, and of having his person and property secured from the insults and ravages of plunderers, and from the ambition and covetousness of priests and tyrants; but, at the same time does not so much as pretend, as we most apparently do, to acknowledge himself indebted to a divine providence for these invaluable blessings. It is this grateful temper of mind, that gives the highest relish to every enjoyment. Others may be joyful; but it is the glorious privilege of the good man alone, that he can be thankful too. And it is from these pious regards to the care of heaven, as the source of those blessings, and that deliverance, which we are now met together to commemorate, and in these our solemn acts of devotion to recognize, that a just improvement of them, a thing of so much importance to be attended to, and which I propose afterwards more distinctly to consider, must take its rise.

In order then to excite in your hearts a becoming gratitude towards God, on account of those signal mercies, to which the
services

services of this day have an immediate reference, let it be in the

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First place seriously considered, that he is indeed the author of them. This is an observation founded upon a plain and obvious truth, the first principle of all religion, and what our present devotions evidently suppose and take for granted, and which if not believed, or not now practically regarded by us, they can indeed be nothing else but insolent and solemn mockerie. Yet plain and evident as it is, it is highly necessarie to be insisted upon, not only on account of its vast importance in itself, but likewise, because we are much more apt to disregard and to overlook it, when rejoicing in the favorable event of things, than when lamenting their sorrowful and gloomy aspect. In the one case the present pressure of affliction, and the suspicious fore-bodings of greater calamities to come, easily incline us to have recourse to that sovereign power, which alone can deliver and help us. But in the other, we are prone to be so much taken up and delighted with the blessing itself, as to forget the gracious hand, from which we have received it. And with respect to mankind in general, it is to be feared, that the same

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same proportion does but too nearly hold, as is remarkable in two different passages of scripture-historie. Not a single sailor in Jonah's ship, who did not cry out mightily to his God. But out of the ten lepers, that were cleansed, one only returned to give thanks. Is then the doctrine of a divine providence to be considered no otherways than as a temporarie and occasional truth; a truth to be firmly regarded and seriously believed in time of affliction, but to be neglected and over-looked, when things prosper and go well with us, or thrown aside, as an insignificant and useless attendant of our joys? In the time of our late troubles we were, I hope, readie to acknowlege the awful hand of providence as "sending these "judgments abroad," for wise and gracious purposes no doubt. And shall we be less forward to acknowlege God, when he appears, as our Savior and redeemer, than when he visits us with the "rod" of affliction, as the avenger of our sins? Forbid it, heaven, that ever such monstrous ingratitude and perverseness should have place in any human heart! Let all due praise and honor be ascribed to that royal and magnanimous commander of our forces, whose prudence directed,

directed, and whose corage animated, our troops to victorie. Let his name be ever dear and pretious to every honest, British heart, and grant him, o God, a long and prosperous life! Let us endeavor to express our gratitude to him, and our loyaltie and attachment to his royal father, who, in order the more speedily and effectually to put an end to the nation's calamities, denied himself in so tender a point, as that of exposing the life of a son, so justly sharing in his parental esteem and affection, to the chances of war, and to the resentments of an implacable and furious enemy, by doing the utmost that lies in our power, towards restraining the spirit of faction and discontent, and towards encouraging the principles of loyaltie and good affection to the happy government, under which we live; and finally, by offering up our ardent supplications to heaven, that his present majestie king George, may long live the blessing and delight of his subjects, and that, when after a good old age, he shall be "gathered to his fathers," his crown may descend in peace to his royal highness the prince of Wales, the son of his youth and the inheritor of his virtues, and continue in that illustrious house, till all earthly

earthly kingdoms shall be dissolved and cease for ever. Thus grateful and affectionate I say, let us be to those, to whom under God, we owe our present blessings, and upon whom our future hopes are founded. But still let us remember, that these great personages are indeed his "ministers only for our good." Particularly let us remember, that the brave and princely hero, who gained the victory, we this day commemorate, and whose praises are so justly celebrated amongst us, was only an instrument, in the hand of providence, of doing these great things for us. In a late action abroad, where the same illustrious leader fought at the head of the same gallant troops, we plainly see, that success depends not alone on human skill or prowess. There are a thousand things, which we call accidents and the chances of war, but which in realitie, are the effects of second causes, operating under the direction and agencie of the first and supreme in nature, after a manner imperceptible to us, which we can neither controle, nor so much as foresee; upon which however success and victory may be chiefly depending. But supposing the success of our arms to be principally owing, so far as concerns the immediate and
secondarie

secondarie causes of it, to the conduct and valor of those who bore them, yet are we altogether as much obliged in reason, to ascribe the glorie of it to God, as if it had been wholly effected by an imperceptible concurrence of natural causes in our favor, or even by a miraculous influence from above. For “in whom” is it that we and all creatures whatsoever “live and move, “and have our being?” to whom do we owe the continuance of our rational faculties and active powers? who is it, that causes the “corn and the grasse to grow, for the nourishment both of man and of beast?” or, who, that, during a long winter campaign, in a cold and barren cuntry, prevented sickness and mortalitie from spreading among our troops? are not all these things to be ascribed to that God, who “giveth to all life and breath, “and all things?” But let us in the

Next place, reflect a while upon the greatness of that deliverance, of which it appears thus plainly, that God is to be acknowledged as the author. And here we need only call to mind, what were our apprehensions of things during the time of our common danger. Nor shall we at all aggravate the calamities, that would have followed upon

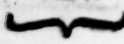
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our enemies success, even though we borrow our ideas of it from those we formed, when our fears were strongest, and our danger at the height. Since it is indeed impossible, that the most terrified imagination should ever be able to point out a scene of more horrid miserie, than what would actually have taken place in consequence of such an event. Slaverie, povertie, and ignorance, three of the most dreadful evils, that can befall a nation, must have been our certain and inevitable doom. What deeper or more ignominious slaverie to be conceived of, than the being governed by the arbitrarie will of one, who would have been himself a double slave, dependent upon one foreign court for the exercise of his power, and upon another for the articles of his faith? And such a state of absolute slaverie is of course a state of absolute povertie. For who can be poorer, than they, who have nothing that they can call their own? And as our wealth and propertie would thus have been intirely at the disposal of another, so it is easy to discover the channels thro' which it would have been actually drained off. Greedie priests, ambitious courtiers, cloystered monks, and foreign masters, would all have put in their
 respective

respective claims; and in a little time have turned this goodlie, "fruitful land" into a desolate and howling "wilderness." And you well know, that poperie is the declared and open enemie of all free inquirie. It cannot subsist but by the suppression of it. It therefore takes everie method for discouraging it; and forbids it under the severest penalties. What then must in a few years have been the consequence of its introduction or re-establishment here; but a state of the most lamentable ignorance; the loss of all those glorious truths, the contemplation and studie of which are now so much our refreshment and delight, and, in the room of them, idle and ridiculous legends imposed upon us for our entertainment, priestly tricks and solemn fopperies for our devotion, and the decrees of councils and of popes for the criterion and center of our faith. It is true these evils would not have come upon us suddenly and at once. No; seas of blood and flames of martyrdom must have been the "beginning of" our "sorrows." For it is by no means to be imagined, that the brave, undaunted spirit of British libertie, that has been long flourishing and improving in this our happy isle, would have been

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easily subdued, or that a few pettie victories could have sufficed for turning a nation of free men into a kingdom of slaves. The advancing success of our enemiess would only have rendered the contest more violent, and the scene more dreadful. And, if we must at length have been conquered, it would probably have been at an inconceivable expence both of blood and treasure. Severe and terrible indeed, would have been the conflict of such a time. And have we not so much the greater reason to be warm and fervent in our thanksgivings and songs of praise to that almightie being, who has not only delivered us from those dire calamities of established tyrannie and superstition, which our enemies were designing to bring upon us, but has likewise done it without obliging us to so sharp and bloodie a contest for the averting of them? And have we not, in particular, reason to be thankful, at the same time, that we reflect with pitie and compassion upon the case of many of our countrie men, who have so much suffered from the insults and rapine of lawless plunderers, that things were not brought to such an extremitie, as to render this citie a scene of havoc and bloodshed; which

which must in all probabilitie have been the case, before our enemies could have looked upon themselves as intirely successful in those iniquitous measures they had projected? We all remember the time when such a scene was thought to be something more than possible. Some might imagine it more than probable. But God has averted the impending storm. We hear no more of advancing enemies, plundered towns, and wasted villages. Peace and tranquillitie is again restored to our late afflicted land. Our enemies are baffled and confounded; thousands of them slain upon the field of battle. upon many of them the final sentence of justice has been executed: many more are expecting it---and the rest, driven to seek their refuge on barren rocks, in desert-islands and foreign climes. And now far other views, than those we have just been contemplating, present themselves to our glad and joyful minds. We are still a free and protestant people. Libertie and a well constituted government, the cultivation and improvement of every polite art and useful branch of knowlege, conspire in rendering us the envie of far-distant realms. Libertie without government, laws, and the just re-

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finements of cultivated reason, is apt to degenerate into rude barbaritie and wild disorder. Witness some of the savage and untutored nations of Afric. And on the other hand, truth, light, and knowlege, without libertie of profession, education, and worship, must be a state of all others the most piteous and deplorable; in which the unhappie alternative is, either violently and unnaturally to suppress the generous feelings and strong illuminations of the mind, or else to expose the life and fortune to all the cruel ravages and efforts of persecution. And this is at present the sad and melancholy case of our poor, distressed brethren, the protestants in France. But we are the peculiar and highly favored people of the earth, among whom, truth, with everie species of rational and christian knowlege, are advancing, under the kind and friendly influences of libertie. And in consequence of such improvements libertie itself is understood, valued, regulated, and adorned, and by virtue of discipline and wholesome laws, is, or at least may be, if the fault be not our own, rendered subservient to the noblest ends and purposes of human life. And it is of these glorious inestimable privileges, that God has given us
a fresh

a fresh and renewed grant, by the signal and complete victorie so lately gained over those, who would have torn them from us.

And we may still live on, for so indulgent heaven seems now to promise, in the study of religion, in searching the scriptures, in worshiping God, according to the conviction of our own judgment, and pursuing, whatever laudable designs we may think proper to engage in, without molestation or disturbance from oppressive and arbitrarie power. Thus great and important is that salvation, which God has wrought out for us; and such abundant reason have we to “give thanks unto the Lord, who has re-
“deemed us from the hand of our ene-
“mies.” But still farther to inflame your gratitude, let me remind you in the

Third place, of some particular circumstances accompanying this great deliverance, which ought, undoubtedly, to heighten our ideas of it. It is well known, that when the rebellion first broke out in Scotland, a very considerable part of our national troops were abroad in Flanders. And it has been very piously observed by some, that contrarie to what might have been expected at that season of the year, the wind conti-

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nued for some days in a point, of all others the most favorable to their direct and speedie passage hither. And, though, as has been already hinted, the kind and gracious hand of providence prevented things from coming to the last extremitie and severest conflict, yet the rebellion continued much longer, than we were ready to imagine, upon its first breaking out, that it would. Our enemies were in one battle victorious, and in another not beaten; and were at one time advanced into the very heart of England. These are so many circumstances of terror and alarm naturally tending to recommend and endear the deliverance, which God in his own due time accomplished in our behalf, and by gradual and easie steps to lead us to a grateful acknowledgement of a divine providence in our success; which had it been direct and instantaneous we might have been too apt to ascribe to our own invincible prowess. Another circumstance, which ought by all means to warm and invigorate our thanksgivings upon this occasion is, that the life and person of his royal highness, the duke were so mercifully preserved. Tho' his fall in so glorious a cause, would indeed have been truly great, and have redounded

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to his immortal honor, yet what an inexpressible damp would it have been to our joys upon this occasion, had the victorie of Culloden been stained with the blood of so brave a prince. But thanks to kind heaven he lives to share in the triumphs of that auspicious day; to see and to enjoy the happy effects of it. And not only lives, but lives unhurt, either by the sword of the enemy, or by the uncommon fatigues, of so long a jurnie and a winter campaign. Nor ought it by any means to be forgotten, but indeed to be here particularly insisted upon, as a circumstance greatly enhancing the price and value of our deliverance; that not only was the life of the royal commander of our forces so mercifully defended in the day of battle; but, that in the midst of so great and terrible a slaughter on the side of the enemy, the number killed on our own was so extremely slight and inconsiderable. Nothing but the fighting in so glorious a cause, as that of libertie and religion, could sufficiently reconcile us to the thought of having so many brave lives exposed to the desperate furie of enraged and merciless rebels. What just matter then of praise and thankfulness is it, that, though all

were exposed, so very few fell the victims of of their malice. These are some circumstances attending a deliverance in itself so great and important, that ought surely to animate those thanksgivings, which we are now presenting to God, on account of it. And let me add

One consideration more, tending to enliven our gratitude upon this occasion; and that is, our character as a people. For, very far, are we from being able to say, with any truth or propriety, even in the lowest and most justifiable sense of that language, “we are worthie, for whom” heaven has “done this.” In christian light and knowlege indeed we may perhaps excel any nation of the earth. But this is rather our privilege, than our merit; and when compared with our sad misimprovement of it, must be so far from recommending us to the favor of God, as highly to aggravate our guilt in his sight. And must we not be forced to own, that, notwithstanding all our boasted light and knowlege, our intellectual and religious improvements, we are a degenerate and corrupted people; lost in indolence and inconsideration, sunk in luxurie and effeminacie? What numbers are there among us
destitute

destitute of the very appearance and profession of religion, almost every moment affronting the God of heaven and earth, by their horrid oaths and imprecations! And among the professors of it, how few that make it any part of their serious studie, to act agreeably to the high and sacred name they bear? how many that are contenting themselves with the profession only, with the mere formalitie of an external devotion; nay more, perhaps making use of it, with a profane and malignant pleasure, as a convenient cloke for their vices? But, notwithstanding this dreadful prevalence and triumph of iniquitie, hath God thus signally appeared for the continuance amongst us of those privileges, which we have so grossly perverted and abused. Here is not only goodness and loving kindness, but most abundant mercie and forbearance. “O give thanks therefore unto the Lord, for he is good;” “for his *mercie* endureth for ever.” Let “the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.”

So far as this exhortation may be supposed to refer to the outward celebrations of the divine mercie and goodness, we have now been complying

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complying with it. But these are only intended, as natural expressions of our inward devotion and gratitude; upon this happy occasion, and as the means of cherishing the pious sentiment. If we really believe a divine providence to have been concerned in our deliverance, and with due humilitie acknowledge ourselves indebted to the mercies of heaven for it, we must, I think, of necessity conclude, that it was intended to have some moral influence upon our minds and temper. We read of "the voice" of affliction and of judgment. And can divine compassion be without a meaning? If we have any just sense of those perfections and attributes we ascribe to the sovereign mind, we cannot but conclude, that the design of all his providential dispensations, is to lead us to repentance and the amendment of our ways. And, if we have any sincere, ingenuous principle of gratitude in our hearts, we cannot fail of giving this manifestation and proof of it. It will be the unavoidable effect of such a principle. An effect, which not appearing in our lives and conversation, we may certainly conclude ourselves to be destitute of it, and that these our external modes of devotion, are nothing but

but solemn farce and hypocrisie. For can we gratefully admire divine goodness and compassion, and yet entertain no thoughts of cherishing in our own minds that likeness to it, in which consists the very essence of all genuine and acceptable religion? Or how else can we express our gratitude to that God, who is infinitely exalted above being profited by our services; but by "keeping his commandments," by loving our fellow creatures in sincerity and in truth, and by endeavoring to the utmost of our power to promote that happiness, which we cannot but suppose, to have been the ultimate purpose and view of Deitie in the original formation of the world, and to be alike the end of all his providential measures in the government of it? Some perhaps may pretend to be above being influenced by mere motives of interest and fear. And certain it is, that, tho' such motives may be of very considerable use towards awakening our attention to religious truths and maxims, yet, till by farther reflection upon them, we have learned to act upon nobler principles, we cannot, with any justness or propriety, suppose ourselves possessed of the really virtuous and worthy character. But is gratitude too
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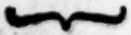
become a mercenarie and servile principle? or is it not indeed one of the most disinterested, generous passions, that ever warmed a human breast? is it not in itself so much real virtue and intrinsic worth? Let gratitude then complete that repentance, which the fears and alarms excited by our late troubles may have happily begun. And “being delivered out of the hands of our
“enemies, let us serve the Lord without
“fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the
“days of our lives.”

To conclude; the blessings, in which we this day rejoice, and for which by these solemnities we are professing so high a value, are the restoration of peace and quietness within our own borders, the preservation of our just rights and liberties, in opposition to tyrannie and arbitrarie power, and the securitie of christian knowlege and the protestant religion, in opposition to anti-christian darkness, and the superstitions of poperie. Let us then shew the love we have for peace, by cultivating it in our own temper and behavior, and by exerting our best endeavors for putting a stop to those uncharitable divisions and unchristian animosities, which so sadly prevail amongst us.

Being

Being called to libertie, let us not turn it
“ into wantoness” and a curse, or become
the slaves of our own exorbitant and lawless
passions. And enjoying, as we still continue
to do, in consequence of the mercies we
this day celebrate, the high and glorious
privileges of the gospel, daily lying open to
our view in all its original simplicities and
genuine truth, let it be our care to act in a
manner agreeable to the great design of it.
And what was that ; but “ to teach us to
“ denie ungodliness and worldly lust, and to
“ live soberly, righteously, and godly, in
“ this present world ?” If this grand and
ultimate purpose of christianitie be not an-
swered in our lives and conversation, the
advantages we have enjoyed, by our profession
of it, will only be so many aggravations of
our condemnation and our guilt. Nor let
us be so presumptuously vain, as to imagine,
that by the happy end, that has been put to
our late troubles, we have been placed out
of the reach of divine judgments for the
future. If our incorrigible impenitence,
should make it necessary, God may still
punish us by other methods, or by sending
again amongst us that desolating sword, from
which we have so lately been delivered. Let

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us therefore rejoice, not with a thoughtless and giddy extravagance, but with the temper and moderation of serious christians; and with sincere resolutions for that repentance and amendment of manners, which, whenever it becomes general, will be the surest and best foundation, upon which to expect the continuance of the divine favor and protection.

On

On the LOVE of our COUNTRY.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the OLD JEWRY,

NOVEMBER 4, 1753.

R

On the Love of our Country.

A
S. E. R. M. O. N.

Preached at the OLD JEWRY.

November 4. 1753.

S E R M O N IX.

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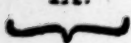
If I forget thee, o Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

AS we are now upon the eve of that anniverſarie, which reminds us of two ſignal deliverances, that, in the courſe of divine providence, have been accompliſhed in favor of theſe nations, I think myſelf called upon to devote the preſent ſervice, in a more peculiar manner, to the cauſe of libertie, and of my countrie. I apprehend, that we cannot in a better way commemorate theſe deliverances, than by endeavoring to warm and animate our hearts

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with a just sense of the value and importance of the blessings, which were by them secured to us, and to cherish in our minds that temper and disposition, which ought to prevail amongst us, as the only means under God, by which they can be transmitted to posteritie. The text indeed expresses no more, than a general tenderness and affection for our countrie. But, when libertie and the love of our countrie are, each of them, considered in their just and proper light, they must appear to constitute, in effect, one and the same topic of discourse. And, if the one be rightly treated of, the other must be continually kept in view. For libertie is that to a countrie or bodie politic, which health is to the natural one. So far as libertie is wanting, so far is our countrie distempered and disordered. And when it is intirely destroyed and lost, then is our countrie perished and undone. And if there be any such natural relation subsisting, as that between a citizen and the state or public communitie, to encourage by our own conduct any schemes or measures, any modes or customs, that have a tendencie to deprive us of this inestimable blessing, would be acting a part, alike unnatural and absurd,

as it would be, wilfully to wound, deface, or maim our own bodies, or expose them to certain contagion and disease. It is therefore in the preservation, securitie, and perfection of libertie, that all our care and concern, as lovers of our countrie, ought to terminate. And it will not surely be thought by any one, that the discoursing upon such a subject now, can be at all superfluous or unnecessary. We complain of the decay of all other virtues. And it would be strange indeed, if amidst this general corruption, the love of our countrie alone should have maintained its strength and vigor. As there are no appearances to justify such a supposition, so it would be manifestly contrarie to that affinity and connection, that must necessarily be supposed between the several obligations of virtue, as being all of them derived from the one, supreme, universal law of benevolence and love. Or should it be admitted, that, notwithstanding our lamentable corruption and depravities in other respects, the love of our countrie had, by some means or other, retained its genuine influence over the minds of the generalitie amongst us, yet should we not be contributing all we can toward the continuance of

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such a spirit? can this be ever unseasonable or unnecessary? can we be too much in earnest in endeavoring to render it still more vigorous and extensive? Let every one, who is conscious to himself of a sincere and well established affection to our public rights and liberties, to our national welfare and prosperity, be congratulated upon this worthie and laudable disposition. But let it be remembered, that it would be altogether as absurd to imagine, that such a sincere friend and lover of his countrie should be displeased with any attempt to recommend the like disposition to others, as, that a temperate man should be displeased with a discourse upon sobriety, or a pious man with one, that inculcates the sentiments of devotion. Must not every such person be sensible, that his own generous and public spirit is capable of being still farther improved? And must he not wish to see others animated with the like? Or what can more worthily employ the thought and labor of a christian minister, than the insisting upon so extended and copious a branch of that universal love, which one of the apostles of our blessed Savior has, in such express language, asserted to be the very “end” of the gospel “commandment,”

“mandment,” or institution? What though it be indeed included in this general principle itself, as a necessarie and inseparable branch of it? Is not this equally true concerning all those other duties of moralitie, which we nevertheless justly consider, as deserving to be distinctly and separately enforced? On all these accounts it must needs appear, that, nothing can induce us to apprehend a discourse upon such a subject to be at present unsutable or unnecessarie, but our own great defect in the temper, it is designed to recommend. And this, whatever may be our mistaken apprehensions arising from that defect, will be in realitie the strongest reason imaginable, for insisting upon it. The love of our countrie therefore in every view, that we can take of it, upon every supposition, that we can make, as to its influence and power, over our own or the minds of our fellow Britons, demands our more particular and serious consideration. And in farther discoursing upon it, I propose, in the

First place, to lay before you some observations relating to the nature and importance of this affection: Secondly, to consider, what influence it ought to have upon

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our conduct and behavior: And then to conclude with the improvement of the whole.*

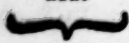
First, I am to lay before you some observations relating to the nature and importance of this dutie. And here we ought in the

First place, to be very careful in distinguishing this truly generous and exalted affection from some other passions of a very different nature; which, when the real love of our countrie is upon the decline, are apt to substitute themselves in the room of it. They assume its name. And they may indeed be properly considered as perversions and depravations of the original and just affection itself. Such, for instance, is national pride and vanitie. This, like the pride of individuals, gives us such a high conceit of our national genius, and accomplishments, of our national taste and manners, strength and power, as must needs prove a very great obstruction to the firmer establishment and farther progress of our prosperitie and honor as a people. It must be owned indeed; and it ought to be owned with the warmest gratitude to the sovereign and most gracious providence of God; that we are a people eminently distinguished by the possession of those

those invaluable privileges, for which so many other nations and kingdoms of the world can only wish, with scarce a possibilitie, according to all present appearances, of being ever favored with the actual enjoyment of them. But, as in the case of particular persons and characters, there are none so improved, as not to admit of higher degrees of perfection; so whatever be the advantages, privileges and honors, which, as a public communitie, we enjoy, we cannot, but in nature and reason suppose them capable of being still farther extended, as well as more completely and firmly secured. And the opinion, which some, it is to be feared, are too apt to entertain, of its being absolutely impossible, that any addition can be made to our national happiness, or that any thing is to be done towards rendering it more firm and lasting, can, with but little consistencie, be thought to procede, from a just and well-regulated sense of the worth and importance of our common privileges. This would naturally create a continued desire of rendering them as complete, as solid, and as extensive, as the necessary imperfection attending all human affairs will any way admit of. To what then can it be imputed;

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imputed; but to that national pride and vanity, which totally excludes thought and consideration, and leads us to ground our apprehensions concerning the happiness and honor of our nation, not upon any deliberate reflection on those inestimable privileges, of which we are really and in fact possessed; but upon mere imagination and presumption, which are always extravagant and boundless? I utterly disclaim and abhor the thought of suggesting any thing, with a design to encourage that spirit of dissatisfaction, murmuring, and discontent, which in a nation blessed and honored like ours, is not only offering the highest indignity to our constitution and government, but likewise the most disingenuous and ungrateful affront to the providence of the Almighty. But still it must be confessed, that there is a natural medium between this repining and ungrateful spirit, and the vain and arrogant conceit of our having already attained to the perfection of our dignitie and happiness as a people. This latter must not only be a fatal impediment to the progress and advancement of our public welfare; but has likewise the most unhappy tendencie to lull us into a supine and indolent security, to throw us into a state of
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utter inattention and unconcern about a common interest, and on all these accounts to render that high degree of happiness, which we actually do possess, precarious, and expose it to the utmost danger. The medium, therefore, which I have hinted at, must needs be that, which a sincere and uncorrupted love of our countrie will of itself, shunning these extremes, naturally dictate and produce. And, should it once come to characterise our public manners, the most important and happy effects may justly be expected from it.

But there is another irregularitie of disposition, which is sometimes substituted in the room of a sound and genuine affection to our countrie. And that is, what we may call, national selfishness. It may be in some measure owing to that pride and vanitie, of which we have already spoken. By this we may be disposed to consider the interests of other national communities, as not worthy of our regard, and consequently to apprehend, that they may be freely sacrificed or boldly attacked, whenever our own particular and separate interest, as a nation, may seem to require it. It may however be supposed more directly to spring from narrow

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and contracted principles, and be distinctly looked upon, as an inordinate attachment to the interests of a single communitie, in opposition to the general good, or at least to the exclusion of a just concern for the more extended welfare of mankind at large, and in direct contrariety to that general benevolence, to which, according to the supreme law both of nature and of the gospel, every particular affection is to be subservient. This inordinate passion is very observable in some of those ancient states, among whom, the love of our countrie has been celebrated in the highest strains; and among whom too, it had many great and glorious effects. From hence it has come to pass, that these affections, in realitie so different, have sometimes been confounded and mistaken for one another. And prejudices have been conceived against any attempts to recommend the love of our countrie; as if it meant somewhat but very little differing from an unnatural delight in spreading devastation and slaughter, throughout the rest of the world, purely for the sake of enlarging our own territories, empire, and riches. But this is entirely a false and corrupted view of it. So far indeed is the love of our countrie from
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being, in its just and natural effects, inconsistent with the principle of diffusive and general benevolence, that it is only by cultivating and cherishing it, only by pursuing its dictates and acting according to the views and sentiments it inspires, that we can preserve ourselves, as a nation, in a capacitie for assisting and befriending other nations. And it ought to be considered as one distinct and most important motive to the love of our countrie, that we can no otherways preserve that national dignitie and importance, which may enable us to protect, defend, or restore the libertie of other states, than by retaining in our minds a just and lively sense of the inestimable worth and value of our own rights and privileges, as a people. Nay, without this, it is plain, that we shall not so much as have the disposition to befriend or to relieve them. And on the other hand, the more we are animated with a sincere and generous concern for the continuance, establishment, and encrease of our own common privileges and blessings, the more shall we be disposed to commiserate the case of those, who are unjustly and iniquitously deprived of the like. All our professions therefore of a zeal for the protestant interest abroad,

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abroad, and of pitie and compassion towards those, who in other nations, wear the ignominious and galling chains of servitude and oppression, are to be looked upon, as merely hypocritical and delusive, if at the same time we are suffering the love of our own countrie to languish and die away in our bosoms. But I would observe

Secondly, with respect to the love of our countrie, that it is not to be considered as a merely temporary, or occasional dutie, but as a virtue of perpetual and lasting obligation. There is too much reason to apprehend, that it begins to be looked upon by many as a stale and antiquated topic, fit only to be revived in times of danger, wars, rebellions, and public treasons, when mens fears and alarms will make it popular, and they come to see, that their own personal and immediate safety is depending on it. This is a notion, that it may very well suite the purposes of our enemies, whether secret or open, to encourage. But it is both absurd and in the highest degree pernicious. As a natural and obvious branch of the first and universal law of benevolence, the obligation of it must be equally permanent and unchangeable. And, whilst we have a countrie,
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it must be as much our duty to love it, to prize and value all its real privileges and honors, to lament its follies, to endeavor to the utmost of our power to restrain and to correct them, and, in a word, ardently to wish for and pursue its prosperitie, as it is to cultivate and cherish throughout life the sentiments of benevolence and sympathie towards the several individuals of mankind, with whom we may be conversant. And, as well might we think, that we are to love our neighbor, only, when his house is in flames, or himself languishing under pain and sickness, as, that the love of our countrie is an affection then only to be thought of, when its enemies are in arms. And indeed, if we are not careful to preserve in perpetual and uninterrupted vigor, this generous affection, it will unavoidably fail us in the time of emergency. Nor can it be revived, any more than lost, in an instant. Besides, there are in every countrie, those, who have an interest, separate from that of the communitie, arising from their own ambitious and aspiring views. And a nation may have its traitors within its own bosom, even in times of the profoundest peace. Nay, such times may, in some respects, best favor their iniquitous measures, and

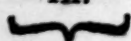
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and give them the fairest opportunitie for accomplishing them, if a lively zeal for the true and solid interests of the communitie, be not, by the other members of it, habitually and diligently cherished, as the only effectual securitie against them. Libertie, both civil and religious, if not encouraged, if not continually attended to, as our glory and honor, if not watched over with a jealous eye, and by the mutual and joint consent of the several individuals constituting that happy societie, in which it has once taken up its residence, must needs be upon the decay. If those false opinions, those vain conceits, and corrupt maxims, which have a natural tendencie to weaken mens affection for it, are not continually guarded against, their destructive and fatal influences must necessarily be hastening on. Tho' it be in itself so excellent, so glorious a cause, it cannot however be self supported. To neglect it therefore, is to ruin it. But give me leave to observe

Thirdly, with respect to the love of our countrie, that, as it is not a merely temporarie or occasional dutie, so neither is it the dutie of a few particular persons alone, but of general and unlimited obligation.

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To consider either the capacitie or the obligation of indulging this generous passion as belonging only to persons of a particular education or turn of mind, or to confine it to some peculiar station or rank in life, would be, in effect, to vacate and annul all moral obligations and social duties whatsoever. For is there any one pretence to be alleged for thus restraining and limiting this particular virtue, which would not hold equally good for limiting in like manner all the rest? Is it not always supposed, that men of every rank and condition, however narrow and contracted may be their sphere of action, are yet capable of indulging and cherishing the principle of universal benevolence, and that it is their indispensable duty to cultivate it in their minds? But is it possible, that they should be capable of this more enlarged, this extensive, universal affection, and yet not have minds capacious enough for the love of a single communitie? or must not everie subordinate interest in societie, whether it be our own, or that of our neighbor, friend, or familie, be involved in the general welfare of it? If therefore we are bound at least to have a concern for these, we are, of course and by necessary consequence, bound to cultivate

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an affection to the common weal. Besides, of what advantage would this love of our countrie be even to the public, were it obligatory only upon a few particular persons? could we have any certain dependance upon the lasting honor and integrity of these? and, if they, deserting this principle, should renounce and abandon the true interest of their countrie, where must be our refuge, but in the temper and just affection of the communitie itself? It is therefore the business and the duty of all, to be cultivating a sincere and ardent love of their countrie. And it must be beyond dispute, that such an ingenuous and liberal spirit, expressing itself by a zealous attachment to its rights and liberties, and a warm concern for the preservation of its privileges and honor, and prevailing amongst the general bodie of a people, must, in the most effectual manner, check rebellion and restrain the malice of traitors. It would make faction tremble. It would convince any, who might design to aggrandize themselves by the sacrifice and ruin of the public, of the vanitie, and insolence of their views. And finally, it would put an immediate stop to that venalitie and corruption, that utter renunciation

nunciation of integritie, that, fatal, established commerce of iniquitie, that are so visible in some of these transactions, by which our national libertie and honour are most essentially affected. But this directly leads us, having thus largely considered the nature and importance of that love of our countrie, which is in so lively and animated a manner, expressed in the words of my text, to shew in the

Second place, what influence such a spirit generally prevailing among us, would have upon our temper and actions. This must be absolutely determined by that maxim of Solomon's, the truth and certainty of which has been confirmed by the experience of all ages, and of almost all the states and kingdoms of the world. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people." The sincere love of our countrie, therefore, will naturally express itself by keeping up a strict regard, in our own conduct and behavior, to the best and purest maxims of religion and virtue. It will strongly induce us to cultivate that spirit of devotion and pietie towards the great, the good, the infinitely merciful creator of the universe; which will naturally

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produce the highest and the securest principles of fortitude and magnanimitie in adhering to truth, equitie, justice, and honor, amidst all the possible temptations and snares of life. It will put us upon continually endeavoring to warm and animate our hearts, with the most tender and endearing concern for every individual of our race; more especially for those, with whom we are connected by the ties of natural relation or civil commerce, and for such, whose probity and virtue cannot fail of recommending them to the peculiar esteem of all, who are themselves possessed of the like honorable and worthy principles. It will engage us to form the most determinate resolutions against that luxurie, pomp, and pride of life, which are the almost certain bane of integritie, and corrupters of everie honest and generous affection. It will be continually prompting us to furnish our own minds with just and proper ideas of the unalienable rights and liberties of mankind, and of all the great, fundamental, and interesting truths of religion, to be delighting and solacing our own hearts with the contemplation of them; and to be exerting ourselves, to the utmost of our power, in endeavoring to promote the
knowledge

knowledge and love of them among others. And, when the love of our countrie is thus conspiring with all the other friendly and social passions of our nature, with the powerful principles and sentiments of religion, with the glorious hope of immortalitie, with the sublime and elevated ambition of becoming the objects of the divine favor and complacencie, what happie effects may not reasonably be expected from it? what securitie and establishment would it most certainly give to the tranquillitie, peace, and honor of our nation? But on the other hand, if we abandon ourselves to impietie and vanitie of every kind; if we care not to have our little, trifling amusements disturbed by the thought of our dutie, and by considering and deliberately weighing, what it is, that our own happiness, our countrie, and our God, require of us and call for at our hands; if we have not a greater abhorrence, than we at present seem to have, and detestation of public vices; if we continue to countenance and apologize for them: if, in particular, we can allow ourselves in abeting that most pernicious of all maxims, that public affairs cannot be transacted without corruption and iniquitie, which is by one effectual blow

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striking at the very root of all reformation; if we remain stupidly unaffected with the thought of that dreadful torrent and growing deluge of wickedness, with which we are on every side surrounded, we have the natural progress of vice and iniquitie, we have the fate of nations from the earliest to the present times, pronouncing our doom, and foretelling our ruin. I know how apt numbers would be to treat all this, as mere tragical declamation: I know, that there are many among us, who seem willing to adopt in favour of their own countrie, that proud and arrogant boast, of the now humbled Babylon; "I sit as a queen, and can see no sorrow;" and to apprehend that our national prosperitie, is so firmly established, as that even vice itself, should it prevail to the most enormous and flagitious height, cannot possibly avail to our ruin, and that therefore it can be a matter of little or no importance, in a national view, to think of any measures, for stopping the progress of it. But I know at the same time, that securitie is so far from being any certain sign of lasting and durable prosperitie, that it is, on the contrarie, one of the worst and most fatal symptoms of impending destruction. It is

is the very temper, that the most inveterate of our enemies, and the most malicious underminers of our liberties, might, in perfect consistencie with these characters, do their utmost to encourage. And, for my own part, when I see justice, truth, integritie, and honor so easily sacrificed by some to servile interest, by others to pride and ambition, by some to vain popularitie, and by others to mere indolence and sloth, I cannot but tremble for my native countrie; and I should be utterly ashamed of myself, my very being would be intolerable to me, if I did not, to the utmost of my power, endeavor to warn you of these things. Perhaps it will be urged, that the reformation of our national character is a thing impossible. To be sure it is, if never so much as aimed at. But is it not worth our while to try, whether it be indeed to be effected or not? Nay, may we not be very sure, that it is, if but in thorough earnest attempted? If not, if none will entertain any serious thoughts about it, or take any measures for promoting it, what must be the consequence; but our sinking so much the sooner into infamie and wretchedness? Or what, though we ourselves, notwithstanding all our vices, may continue free,

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have we no concern for posteritie? what must have been our own condition, how forlorn, how completely miserable, if our ancestors, had felt none for theirs! And how can we better celebrate their virtue, and the glorious exertions of their zeal in the cause of truth and libertie, than by imitating their example, with the generous view of transmitting by that means the blessings, we received from them, to the latest generations? I say, to the latest generations. For suppose, notwithstanding our continued impietie and wickedness, our national privileges and liberties should survive the next, can we contentedly admit the thought, that the next to that should, thro' our negligence and follie, be ruined and undone? And yet, it is to be feared, that, if ever these nations are enslaved, we of this very age shall have our abundant share in the curses of those, who will bear the dreadful load of ignominie and oppression, on account of our pusillanimitie, thoughtlessness and inconsideration, our total immersion in vanitie, riot and pleasure, and our utter disregard to every common and public interest; all which will have contributed so largely towards involving them in such inexpressible

preffible misery and wretchedness. Have we any secret reserve of confidence, upon which we can safely depend, for the continuance of our national prosperitie, besides that favor of the divine providence, which is only to be secured by the justice, puritie, integritie, and uncorruptness of our manners, and a general reformation of life and temper? Shall we trust to our wealth and national affluence? Alas, riches, without that true and just use of them, which is only taught by virtue, will but contribute more effectually to our luxurie, pride, and levitie, and thus the more speedily bring on our ruin. And therefore it is, that the Roman historian, Sallust, dates the first corruption of his countrie from the destruction of their rival city Carthage, by which Rome became more opulent. Another of their historians indeed, I mean Florus, carries it still higher. But both of them agree in imputing it to an accession of wealth and riches, occasioned by the triumphs of their arms. So that at the very period, when the Romans began to conquer others, their own vices were beginning to conquer them. Shall we depend upon it, that, while we continue protestants, we cannot possibly be an enslaved or a miserable

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miserable people? Let us reflect upon that natural and almost inseparable connection, that there is between our religion and our liberties. But let us remember at the same time, that wretchedness and miserie are compatible with any form of religion whatsoever. Rome changed not her gods, when she lost her freedom. And, in the historie and constitution of other states, we may see united, poperie and libertie, protestantism and slavery. Or shall we, after all, presume, that we have no reason to indulge these fears and alarms, because other nations have been altogether as profligate and as wicked, as we? They have so. But then their vices have been their ruin. So that instead of encouraging ourselves by this consideration to continue in our own sins and follies, it ought to be looked upon as a warning immediately to forsake them. Let us not therefore suffer, that glorious spirit of libertie, which once inspired the hearts of our ancestors, and which they so happily transmitted to succeeding times, to be congeled and frozen in our breasts. Let us discard our selfishness. Let us abandon our effeminacie. Let us scorn that mean submission to everie thing, however ridiculous and absurd, that is but consecrated

secrated with the name of fashion, which is continually alienating our minds from whatever is generous and sublime. Nor let us be content with throwing the blame of any discouraging prospects, that we may be at all sensible of, upon those vices and follies of others, in which we imagine ourselves to have the smallest share; but let each man for himself “amend his ways and “his doings,” that we “perish not.”

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The great secret of wisdom is to be
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not.

A SHORT

A SHORT and CANDID VIEW of
POPERIE.

IN A

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Preached at the OLD JEWRY,

NOVEMBER 3, 1754.

A SHORT AND CANDID VIEW OF
POPERY.

IN A

SERMON

Preached at the OLD JEWEY,

November 2, 1756.

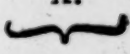
SERMON X.

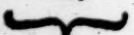
JEREMIAH VI. 16.

*Thus saith the Lord; stand ye in the ways
and see, and ask for the old paths, where
is the good way; and walk therein; and you
shall find rest for your souls.*

THIS passage of scripture I find to
be popularly urged by the advocates
for the Romish religion, in favor
of those enormous and most unnatural cor-
ruptions of poperie, by which the very name
and notion of religion have been so much
scandalized and profaned. And, though in
fact it contains a much better argument for
paganism, than for poperie, yet it is easy to
conceive, how considerable may be the
effect of such a sentence, either solemnly
or

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or pathetically pronounced, especially in conjunction with others of a like sort, upon the passions of weak and ignorant men. It is indeed but a contemptible art, thus to pervert the sense of scripture, and to turn the mere sound of words into motives of conversion. But there are little minds, to which such arts are better accommodated, and upon which they are more likely to operate, than more substantial methods of conviction. And of this, the abetors of poperie are so very sensible, that for the sake of the success, they never scruple the meaness of them. Were it worth our while to enter upon any particular consideration of the argument, to which this application of the text refers, which is indeed almost below consideration, we might observe, that the "old way" is not here recommended, but upon supposition of its being a "good" one. And therefore, if the papists could even prove, that their religion was the oldest, this must needs fail of being a sufficient argument in favor of it, according to the very face and letter of our text itself, unless they could also prove it to be the best. But in truth, this argument from antiquitie, which has been with so much parade and solemnity

solemnity displayed in defence of the Romish church, whatever texts of scripture may be artfully made use of in support of it, is in the highest degree absurd and ridiculous. Poperie, say its advocates, is older than the reformation. And it would be strange indeed, if the existence of this or that mode of religion had not been prior to the rejection of it. But still, I think, the new testament is older than poperie. And, if the protestant religion be more agreeable to the new testament than poperie, then, though, as a reformation from poperie, it must needs be of a later date, yet as a religion claiming to be christian, it has, for certain, this boasted argument of antiquitie, clearly and unexceptionably on its side. But instead of pursuing any reflections of this sort, it is my design in farther discoursing upon these words,

First, to consider what poperie is.

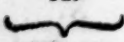
Secondly, what it is founded upon.

Thirdly, to shew the insufficiencie of that foundation. And then

Fourthly, the means, by which its interest and prevalencie may be most effectually opposed. And we must, I am sure, be great strangers to the spirit of devotion, if we do

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not find matter enough, in such a subject, for exciting our warmest gratitude to that sovereign disposer of all events, who “has delivered” us from so dreadful an evil, by the repeted favors of his providence, “who does deliver us,” and in whom alone we are to place our supreme and ultimate confidence, for the continuance of those inestimable blessings, which, in consequence of our reformation from poperie, we enjoy. Let us then, in thankful commemoration of those great and signal events, to which in the order of a divine and most merciful providence, we are indebted for the present possession of them, and the anniversary of which is now so near, proceed to a farther consideration of the subject, in the method that has been already laid down. Let us consider in the

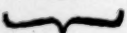
First place, and in a few words, what poperie is. And here, without at all affecting to exaggerate the matter, or to heighten your indignation, on account of the monstrous absurditie of many of its most peculiar tenets, I shall only endeavor to shew you, by instancing in a few plain and undeniable particulars, that it is a religion, according to the essential and fundamental constitution of it, dishonorable to God, destructive

tive of moral virtue, and pernicious to human societie.

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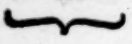
First then, I say, that poperie is a religion dishonorable to God, and tending utterly to subvert the principles of pietie and devotion towards him. Whether the worship of angels, of saints, and of images, in the church of Rome, be, in the strict, theological sense, idolatrous, it may perhaps be difficult to decide. But without at all entering into that dispute, nay supposing it to be absolutely indeterminable, or admitting, if you please, that this worship is not idolatrous; yet nothing can be more apparent, than that the practice has a direct and immediate tendency to corrupt and utterly to debase those acts of devotion, with which it is intermingled. These, when performed in their just and natural simplicitie, have a most powerful aptitude to refine and purifie the affections of the soul, to enoble all its passions, to check and restrain their impetuositie in the pursuit of worldly good, to inspire a generous contempt of mere earthly and sensual pleasure, and thus to destroy the very root of all criminal indulgences. This, I say, is the natural tendencie of devotion. But then we must needs suppose, that in

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order to its having these effects, the mind is to be intensely fixed upon the true and proper object of its supreme adoration, entertaining at the same time the most honorable and exalted conceptions of him. Now is it possible, that this should be the case in the Romish worship, amidst that multiplicity of inferior objects, by which the prostrate votary has his thoughts distracted; those numerous saints, and numerous images, which are perpetually claiming his regard and engaging his attention? Could such a devotion be by any means justified, it must only be, upon the supposition, that it tends to direct the mind more effectually to the contemplation of the great, the glorious, the supreme and eternal Deitie. Yet nothing can be more evident, than that its immediate tendencie is rather to exclude all contemplations of this nature, and to sink it into low and groveling sentiments and apprehensions. Nor does it only tend to divert the worshiper from contemplating the real glories of the great father of the universe, but to introduce, in the room of just and honorable conceptions concerning his nature and attributes, such as are the most unworthie and debasing. For what honorable

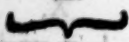
honorable ideas can we form of a Deitie, whom we believe to require from us, as the most acceptable homage and adoration towards himself, the bowing down to a senseless image, or the worshipping, with the most profound respect and reverence, those saints, of whose characters we have no just information, who may for aught we can tell, have been amongst the vilest of human kind, or who perhaps had never more than merely a fictitious existence? Again, let every possible art of sophistrie and scholastic subtletie be made use of, in order to diminish, in some measure, the flagrant and enormous absurdities of transubstantiation; yet is it not plain, that, according to this doctrine, the supreme Deitie is subject to the beck and controul, of every diminutive, scandalous, and blaspheming priest? At whatever time, upon whatever occasion, with whatever views even such a priest thinks proper to pronounce a certain set of words, the supreme Deitie, according to the tenor of this doctrine, is, as it were, obliged to exert his almighty power, in doing what, whoever believes to be done at all, must needs look upon, to be one of the most amazing miracles, that even that almighty power itself can effect. What

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reverence can we be thought to have for a Deitie, whom we believe, to be thus reproachfully submitted to the will and passions of a vain, mortal, worthless man? How natural is it to suppose, agreeably to what appears to be, in fact, the case, that the worshipers believing this wonderful transmutation, should have more reverence for the man that can make a God, than for the God he makes? What can be more horridly affronting to the Supreme, eternal, invisible, infinite God of the universe, than to suppose him capable of being confined within the narrow limits of a man's finger and thumb? Yet these things, and many still more shocking than these, we must believe, if, as they say, by "consecrating of the bread and wine, Jesus Christ, very God and very man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of these sensible signs." But there is another part of the Romish superstition, that is in a peculiar manner dishonorable to God and to his worship, and subversive of the very design of religion. And that is the use of an unknown tongue, in their public forms of devotion. What can tend to give us a more contemptible notion of God, than to imagine
that

that an unmeaning and unintelligible worship should be most of all acceptable to him? What can tend more directly to render the worship of him absolutely ineffectual, with respect to any good or useful influence of it upon our own minds, than to have it performed in a language we understand not? what more likely to lead us into the dangerous apprehension, that a mere form of worship will be sufficient to secure the divine favor and approbation, without any realitie of devotion in the heart? And if it appears that poperie is thus directly, and in the very frame and constitution of it, dishonorable to God and to his worship, tending so fatally to diminish that respect, reverence and homage, which is due to the supreme creator, from every intelligent and rational being, it would from hence alone, follow in the

Next place, that it must be a religion destructive of moral virtue. Nothing can possibly be more so, than such a system of doctrines and rites, as deprives it of all those powerful aids and assistances, which would arise from just apprehensions of the great creator and governor of the universe, and from a rational, lively, habitual, adoration of his most glorious perfections. But what

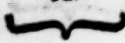
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are we to think moreover of the slight and superficial penances, by which a compensation is made for the grossest immoralities; especially when compared with the heavy punishments inflicted for the smallest deviation from the principles of a sound and orthodox belief? what of those dispensations so easie to be procured for the violation of the most solemn vows and promises, and for all manner of prevarication and treacherie? what of their priestly absolution so effectual, as they affirm, for the remission of sins, and with so little difficultie obtained? what, particularly, of that extreme and final one, which can be refused to none, but upon the severest penalties, in the article of death? and what of the prodigious efficacie towards procuring the heavenly happiness, that is ascribed to masses for the dead? what, I say, can we possibly think of these particulars, but as being so many inventions directly and in the plainest manner calculated to encourage every kind of wickedness, and to strike at the root of all moral virtue, by taking away the indispensable necessitie of it, in order to men's finding acceptance with God their maker, and substituting so many expedients for averting his wrath, besides a sincere and
unfeigned

unfeigned renunciation of those sins, which alone can render us the objects of it? Had the utter extirpation of virtue and of every moral principle and obligation been the thing most expressly and formally intended by the authors of such innovations, it is not easie to conceive, how they could possibly have devised a more probable means of answering such a design. And if religion and virtue be indeed, as we profess to believe, the basis and grand securitie of human happiness, it can scarce be necessarie to add any thing to what has been already alleged towards demonstrating in the

Third place, that poperie must needs be a religion in the highest degree pernicious to human societie. We cannot, however omit to observe in illustration of this particular, that it is a system of principles and doctrine, calculated, according to its most essential views and in necessary subserviencie to them, to suppress human reason, so far as relates to the religious application and employment of it. Reason, that invaluable gift of heaven, from the just and regular exercise of which, in the investigation of religious and moral truth, so much of the happiness of mankind both in their individual and their social capacitie,

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capacitie, must indisputably result. It has made a most unnatural division of mankind into distinct classes or species; some, according to the maxims of the popish system, being made to govern in religion, others blindly to submit to their dictates, and to obey all their most extravagant injunctions; some to be enriched by it, and advanced to the highest power and authoritie, others to be reduced, by means of it, into the most wretched state of servilitie and bondage. And, though we readily allow, that there may be in the Romish communion particular persons, who detest and abhor the principles of persecution, yet that poperie has ever been a persecuting religion is undeniable. It is at present supported upon the maxims of persecution; in consequence of which, the most cruel invasions are now daily made in popish countries, upon the natural rights and liberties, the peace and tranquillitie of human societie. And finally, it is in the very nature of it a religion so absurd and so repugnant to every sentiment of reason, that it is not easy to conceive, how it can otherwise maintain its authoritie. By the prodigious number of its rites and ceremonies, of its holy solemnities and holy days, it naturally

naturally tends to sink the minds of its adherents into stupidity, sloth, and indolence; of which in those countries, that are most tenaciously attached to its principles, there are the most flagrant and incontestable proofs. Add to all this, that by strictly and indispensably injoyning a single life upon so great a part of its votaries, and giving all possible encouragement to it in so many others, it tends to dissolve the most important bands of social union, and has introduced and established the most unnatural combinations in direct opposition and contrariety to the common welfare. This is a brief and general view of poperie as dishonorable to God, as destructive of moral virtue, and as pernicious to human society. And if we now procede in the

Second place, to inquire into the foundations of it, we shall find them to be laid in human policie, in pretended infallibilitie, and ecclesiastical tradition. The first points out to us the ends, that were aimed at by those, who were the principal agents in the formation and contrivance of it, and which we have reason to believe, are still kept in view by its ablest and most vigilant defenders. The latter are the means, or instruments

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are still employed, to inculcate and enforce whatever other artifice or invention may be thought necessary towards answering these ends. When we consider what has been already said concerning the direct, the natural, the apparent, and undeniable tendencie of poperie to corrupt the most essential principles of devotion, to weaken, and, in a manner to dissolve, the obligations of moralitie, it is scarce possible to imagine, that it could have been originally, and in pure simplicitie, designed to promote the cause of virtue and religion; whatever candid allowances are now to be made for the apprehensions of those, who have been for so long a time blinded by its delusions. But no sooner do we begin, to conceive of it, as a system of worldly policie, but it appears to be in all its parts most admirably fitted and adapted for answering the ends of it. By that dreadful tyrannie, which it exercises over men's reason and understanding, it brings their minds into a state of the most abject servilitie. And thus are they prepared tamely and ignominiously to submit to every encroachment, that may be made upon their rights and properties by their governing prince

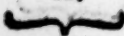
prince or supreme magistrate. And at the same time this prince himself is encouraged, if his disposition be arbitrarie and tyrannical, in all his most ambitious and destructive projects, and in every villainous method, that he can think proper for the execution of them, by having it in his power to procure, as in many cases has been so easily done, the permission and countenance of an authority, which his unhappy subjects are taught to look upon as being in the highest degree sacred, and by those pardons, which are as easy to be purchased, without the least thought of repentance, even for his most atrocious iniquities. When we consider, how much the whole business and trade of auricular confession is calculated to put the priest in possession of the most important secrets, and to give him the fairest opportunity of insinuating the most corrupt and wicked counsels, that may be thought subservient to any particular designs of worldly policie or temporal interest, can we doubt, whether or no, this was the very end of its institution? When we reflect upon the immense riches, that are daily flowing into the treasure of the church, either as donations to holy places, or to consecrated orders of men,

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men, or arising from the distribution of Christ's blood, of the sufferings and merits of saints, of indulgences and dispensations from the infliction of penances, or from praying souls out of purgatorie, is it possible to believe, that this accumulatted wealth, was not the very end proposed and aimed at by these severall inventions? In speculation and theorie, however, one would be apt to imagine, that the greatest difficultie had been still behind. The difficultie, I mean, of making these and other inventions of the like sort, to pass for the most important dictates and essential principles of religion. In vain would it have been to make the appeal to reason. Reason would have rejected them with abhorrence. Equally in vain, to have had recourse to the scriptures, as the test and standard of their truth. Yet was not even this a difficultie too great for Romish policie both to encounter and to overcome. Reason was silenced. The scriptures were locked up. Infallibilitie was pretended; and infallibilitie was acknowledged. But yet, left even this should not be sufficient for procuring a becoming reverence to be paid to the dictates and injunctions of the church, and to answer the ends of a corrupt, ambitious policie;

policie; lest disputes should arise, as in fact they have, concerning the person or persons, in whom this infallibilitie was lodged, or lest the minds of the deluded multitude should be at any time, or upon any extraordinary occasion, disposed to inquire, whether, after all, it resided any where here below; another expedient was devised. Tradition, holie, ecclesiastical tradition was brought in to aid and assist infallibilitie. And because tradition is the only method, by which we can possibly be made acquainted with the opinions of former times, it has been artfully and successfully perverted into a reason for our believing these opinions to be true, however absurd and extravagant; such of them, at least as are best calculated for subserving the ends, that have been already pointed out, as those, which can alone with any consistencie be thought to have been originally aimed at in the general tenor of popish innovations. Here then we have the foundation of poperie in the end it proposes, and the means it makes use of for the accomplishment of it. It will not, I presume, be necessary much to enlarge upon our

Third head of discourse, which was to shew the insufficiencie of this foundation. A
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religion not founded upon reason, cannot be the religion of a man. A religion not to be met with in scripture, cannot be the religion of a christian. Reason and scripture therefore must ultimately decide, even upon the claim of infallibilitie itself. Some appeal must necessarily be made to the reason and judgment of every man's own mind in proof of it. Else every man might pretend to it alike; and every man, for that reason alone, be equally possessed of it. And yet, if such an infallibilitie could be supposed any where to subsist among the sons of men, the church of Rome, would, upon this state of the argument, of all other societies in the world, have the least appearance of being in possession of it. So contradictorie to reason, so palpably absurd and monstrous are many of its doctrines; exceeding in the height and extravagance of their absurdity, any principles whatsoever, that have in any part of the world ever passed under the name or notion of religion. And if reason thus absolutely and peremptorily determines by an immediate inspection and cognizance of fact itself, that the Romish church is not, and cannot be infallible in matters of religion, it does of course determine too, that

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no assurances of such an infallibilitie, to be resident in that church, were ever made by Christ or his apostles; because this would be in effect to suppose, that they had authoris'd all these absurdities. And indeed, what is the plain and obvious sense of that declaration made by our blessed Savior, upon which so much stress has been laid in this interesting controverſie? That declaration I refer to, in which we are assured, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against" his church. what but this, that notwithstanding all the opposition, which the gospel was to meet with from a prejudiced and an unbelieving world, it should nevertheless be victorious and triumphant? And is there any thing in such an assurance or promise, as this, that carries in it the least implication of infallibilitie, either in any single professor of christianitie, or in any body of men united in that profession? And indeed we may easily believe, that the ablest advocates of the church of Rome are well aware of the invaliditie of this claim. Else, why are they so fond of having recourse to that other ground of tradition, in favor of the several corrupt tenets they contend for? If there be in reality a living, infallible head of the church, or a

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would not this alone be absolutely decisive, with respect to every point of doctrine whatsoever? would it not render tradition, as well as scripture, altogether superfluous? why then so little respect for the scriptures, and so much for tradition? The reason is plain. Infallibilitie itself wanted the assistance of some farther light. And tradition, in this case of need, was a much more convenient resource than the authoritie of Christ and his apostles. These, I think, are such reflections, as would naturally result even from the most calm and dispassionate view of the doctrines and scheme of poperie. Let us now procede in the

Fourth place, to point out those methods, by which its influence and prevalencie may be most effectually opposed. These will naturally be collected from what has been already insisted upon, and will, I apprehend, appear in the strongest point of view, by being represented in this comparative light. Thus, for instance, in the

First place, we see that poperie is founded upon a most insolent and presumptuous invasion made upon the right of private judgment. That right, which is in so solemn a manner

manner confirmed and ratified by the gospel of Christ, and by the public, express and frequently repeted, declarations of his holie apostles. Nothing therefore can be more effectual, as a means for our securitie against poperie, than the indulging in ourselves, and giving all possible encoragement to it in others, a free and personal inquirie into the truths and principles of religion. Freedom, absolute, unlimited, uncensured freedom of inquirie, as it is the natural, undoubted privilege of mankind, so it must be, under God, one of our most effectual bulwarks against a religion, that is founded upon the rejection of it. However therefore we may differ in other respects, we ought all to join in asserting and maintaining our libertie thus to differ. This is a common cause. And if any one man may, in any one instance whatsoever, be either deprived of this libertie or censured, condemned, or in any degree made to suffer for his use of it, with equal reason may all.

We have seen likewise in the second place, that poperie has a most direct and immediate tendencie, both to inspire the prince with arbitrarie and tyrannic views, and at the same time to sink the subject into a spirit of tame servilitie. Another natural and effectual

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barrier therefore against the encroachments of poperie must be an ardent love of civil libertie. So far, as this prevails, we must necessarily and from our hearts detest a religion, that tends to the utter extirpation of it. And in the historie of our own nation especially, we have the most solemn warning given us; that poperie and despotic, oppressive power, ought ever to be considered by British men, as mutually aiding and assisting each other.

We have seen in the third place, that by many of the most peculiar solemnities, the stated, established rites of poperie, the worship of God is most unnaturally corrupted and debased, and his name dishonored and blasphemed. Hence it follows, that in proportion to that degree of manly pietie, with which our own hearts are inflamed, and the desire we have of seeing such a spirit more generally diffused amongst mankind, must be our abhorrence of a religion, in the very essential frame of it calculated to extinguish such a spirit, and to substitute, in the room of it, a low and groveling superstition, or at best a pompous farce only, and splendid appearance, of devotion.

Lastly,

Lastly, poperie is a religion adapted to the encouragement of all wickedness and immorality. Notwithstanding the many arts and the perpetual efforts, that were made use of by a long succession of ambitious pontiffs in the see of Rome, to give it its completion and firm establishment in the world, it could never, I believe, have come to be the religion of so great a part of christendom, if it had not been calculated to silence the convictions and stifle the remorse of conscience, and to make men easy in their vices. How much soever therefore we may be inclined, on any other accounts, to favor and indulge an immoral spirit, and to throw contempt upon the sacred obligations of virtue, yet, whilst poperie continues to be the religion of so great a part of Europe; is it not by all of us to be looked upon with a jealous eye? And if so, every one ought for himself to remember, that nothing can have a more immediate or stronger influence towards introducing it among ourselves, than a general spirit of levity and inconsideration, of vanity and sensuality. These have a natural tendency to lead us into an indifference about all religion. And by this very indifference we are prepared, the more easily to resign ourselves to that which is the most absurd.

Lastly, popery is a religion adapted to the
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 and to be every way inclined to re-
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 teresting of the human mind and the human
 nature, it cannot be denied that a general
 spirit of learning and industry, and of
 and christianity. This is the great
 point to be collected in christianity, and
 religion, and it is a very natural and
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 every to that which is the most

The BRITISH VINE.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the OLD JEWRY,

NOVEMBER 5, 1758.

SERMON XI.

PSALM LXXX. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

THESSE words are at once so highly characteristical both of the distinguishing and genuine spirit of poperie, and of those dreadful evils, that inseparably attend it, and so strongly expressive of that great deliverance from it, which we are on this day called upon by the voice of the legislature, by the voice of gratitude,
by

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by the voice of heaven itself, to commemorate, that, according to the nature of the prophetic style, which usually describes future events, by way of allusion to those, that are past, and in the very terms of history, had the passage really been intended, as a prediction of these particulars, they could not have been more distinctly or accurately pointed out. It was in Egypt, that the Israelites suffered such cruel and ignominious bondage; it was there, that for so long a series of years, they groaned, under the most horridly oppressive and deeply galling yoke of tyrannie: there it was, that they lay under the most severe and iniquitous restraints in the exercises and solemnities of religion, and the conscientious worship of their maker, and endured, on that account, the most grievous persecution. and, in order to destroy, if possible, both them and their religion, murder itself was established by a law. And is not this the exact description of the papal usurpation? is not the Roman pontiff, in all these respects, the very Pharaoh of the christian world? and was not this the forlorn and lamentable situation of our ancestors in these kingdoms, for a period of much longer date, than that, in which the Israelites were thus miserably enslaved? And yet, out of this

this very "Egypt" itself, did God at length "bring out" a noble and generous "vine".

The dissensions of papal powers produced a reformation from poperie; and in the amazing and unsearchable wisdom of divine providence, the foundations of a protestant church were laid by one, who was himself a bigoted papist to the last. How justly too may we say of this reformation, that it was brought about by "casting out the heathen," according to the present meaning and usual signification of that term? for what is poperie, but heathenism, in a somewhat different, I can scarcely say, a more specious garb? Notwithstanding all the nice and labored distinctions insisted upon by popish writers, between images and idols, and such different modes of worship, some of which it is alleged, may properly be directed to inferior beings, without implying the guilt of idolatry, upon the whole of this argument, it seems undeniable, either that the papists must needs be guilty of it, or else, that the ancient heathens are as little chargeable with it, as they. That the latter, however, were in fact guilty of it, must be sufficiently evident to the romanists themselves, from the express testimony of the scriptures, which represent it, as
being

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being one principal design of christianitie, to abolish their idolatries. And yet there is not any one argument to be made use of, for the worship of saints, angels, or images, as practised in the church of Rome, so as to exculpate her in this respect, which may not with equal force and propriety be applied in vindication of the heathens, whether ancient or modern, from any imputation of the like sort. And Maximus Tyrius, a well-known, heathen writer, has a whole dissertation upon the use of images and symbols in religion; the general argument of which he sums up, in these remarkable words. “What then” shall we say concerning images? “Let the *mind*, says he, “propose God alone, for the object of its “worship, and, if the Greek find his devout recollection of this sovereign being “to be assisted by the art of the statuarie; if “a consecrated river answers the same end to “those of some other nation, or the sacred “fire to another; I blame not this variety. “let them only be careful to understand, to “love, and with the best sentiments they “are able to recognize that being, of whom “they profess themselves to be the worshippers.” Nor can I think it any advantage

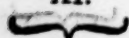
tage to the protestant cause, that we should studiously affect to make the very worst of poperie, or be at the pains to exaggerate its absurdities and corruptions. its own natural complexion and genuine features, the opinions and practices, which, under the most solemn anathemas, it inculcates, and the spirit, which it never fails to encourage in its votaries, are in themselves abundantly sufficient to excite in our minds the utmost abhorrence of it, and, one would think, to impress, in characters indelible, upon every British heart, a most grateful and affectionate sense of those signal deliverances from it, which by the outstretched and mightie hand of God's merciful providence have in our behalf been accomplished. Let the apologists in that communion, therefore, make the most of this ancient plea. Yet how, I would ask, will they applie it to their adoration of the consecrated host? this, this is idolatrie, not only in the highest degree, but in the grossest form, and, if I mistake not, a far more absurd and senseless species of it, than any, that is to be met with in the historie of the heathen world. For, though the Egyptians paid a religious veneration to garlic and onions, they were far, however, from look-

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ing upon them, as sovereign divinities. Whereas the council of Trent expressly affirms concerning the eucharistical bread, that, "after consecration it is transformed
"into the real substance of Jesus Christ,
"who is truly God and truly man." That, which comes the nearest in historie to this high-strained absurditie, is what we are told concerning a particular sect among the ancient Arabs, who it seems paid so much religious veneration to a certain piece of dough, that they would never eat of it, till by the extremest hunger compelled. But that they looked upon it to be either "truly
"God," or "truly man," or any thing else, but what their senses shewed it to be, a piece of bread, does not appear. The nature and tendencie of things, however, is the same, whatever name they go by. And so great a conformitie is there between that system of popish worship, which we call idolatrous, and that of the ancient heathens, which the papists themselves so denominate, that whatever evil tendencie there was in the latter towards corrupting the minds of men, and alienating their affections from the supreme object of reverence and devotion, the one living and eternal God, must needs be, upon
a general

a general consideration of it, apparent in the former. The same causes must universally operate towards the same effects. As therefore the idolatry of the heathen world was one of the principal reasons for the introduction and establishment of christianity, those modes of worship in the Romish communion, which are so extremely like it, that we know not how, in justice, to give them any other name, cannot, surely, but be looked upon, by the consistent christian, as one of the most flagrant, among the numerous corruptions in religion, and deviations from the simplicity of the gospel, that are abetted by it. But the heathens, it will be said, offered up human sacrifices in their religious worship. And do not the papists, in effect, the same? or in what other light can we view the massacres and assassinations, that have been deliberately and avowedly committed in the cause, and for the service of religion, by what other name can we so properly call those public executions, which they themselves style "acts of faith," and which are looked upon by great numbers, among the Romish votaries, as one of the highest and most venerable solemnities of their religion? And if what historie records

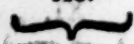
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concerning certain monasteries and the religious orders residing in them, be true, the obscenities of the heathen worship were but too nearly paralleled by the irregularities committed in those sacred mansions.

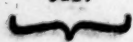
But the Psalmist goes on; “thou preparedst room before it.” How exactly was this verified in the doctrine of Wickliffe, and the Lollards, which had with so much success been publicly maintained among us, long before the reformation took place; and without which previous or introductory scene of providence, the whole force of civil authority, in all probability, would not have been able to effect it? Soon after indeed, this very authority itself threatened the utter destruction of the goodly “vine,” which had been so lately “planted among us.” and our condition was not altogether unlike that of the ancient Israelites, who had no sooner escaped out of the hands of Pharaoh, than they began to murmur at Moses for having been the instrument of their deliverance; and to express the highest impatience for voluntarily resuming that yoke, which, when imposed upon them, had been so severely felt. By the speedy succession, however, by the long and glorious reign of
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our first protestant princes, our securitie seemed to be, in the firmest manner established. And yet that very securitie had like to have proved our overthrow, by instigating the rage and malice of our popish enemies to attempt, in the succeeding reign, the execution of that infernal plot, which, thanks be given to the good providence of God, instead of commemorating in the bitterest anguish of soul, as might have been the case with many among us, had that execrable attempt succeeded, who would from thence, have dated the loss of that light and libertie, the want of which, even in the midst of general ignorance and slavery, they might have both understanding and generositie enough to deplore; is now become the foundation of our national triumphs. This is a "day, which the Lord has made;" we will "rejoice and be glad in it;" the snare is broken; "and we have escaped." And we have now to say with Moses. "The Lord "is our strength and our song, and he is "become our salvation." He is my God, and I will "prepare him an habitation; "my fathers God, and I will exalt him." And yet it was only a single deliverance, that Moses here celebrates in such joyful



strains. Whereas, with respect to us of this peculiarly blessed and happy nation, it seems to have been the delight of providence to repeat even its most signal favors, and by the most gracious contrivances of unerring wisdom to endear our blessings by endangering them. The arm of regal authority was a second time lifted up against us, and the councils of the reigning prince had once more deliberately and solemnly doomed us to darkness and destruction, to ignorance and slavery. But the British genius, with a generous indignation, rejected the offered insult, and by the superior arm of providence was enabled to repel it. And in consequence of that revolution, which, this intended outrage upon our constitution and laws, our liberties and religion, had made so necessary, that one would think none but such as were enemies to these, could be foes to that; in consequence of that legal security, that has been given by it to the protestant interest among us, in consequence of that protestant succession it has introduced, how justly may we adopt the subsequent language of the text, pursue the allusion of it, in reference to our own national rights and privileges, our flourishing trade and extended commerce, that

that freedom of religious inquirie, which is every where allowed, and by numbers, with such a laudable zeal, encouraged, and say, lifting up our hearts in grateful ardor to heaven; "thou hast" not only "brought
" a vine out of Egypt, thou hast" not only
" cast out the heathen and planted it, thou
" didst" not only "prepare room for it: but
" thou hast caused it also to take deep root,
" and it has filled the land, the hills are
" covered with the shadow of it, and the
" boughs thereof are like goodly cedars; she
" sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her
" branches unto the river." We now seem to be in that happy situation, as to have nothing to fear, but from ourselves. Not that I would by any means be thought to insinuate that it is "our own right hand," which can save us from those enemies, with whom we are now actually engaged in a war, the issue and event of which may, to the latest ages, most deeply affect our national prosperitie and honor. No: it is the same divine, providential hand, which first "brought the vine out of
" Egypt," that can alone defend and cherish it. And if it would, as we shall all most readily allow; if, I say, it would be the height of insolent impietie, to think, that

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there were no obligations to providence, no gratitude due to heaven, on account of that great salvation; some particulars of which I have now been hinting at, for the sake of concurring in my discourse with those ingenuous sentiments of your own minds, which cannot but have been excited by the return of this memorable anniverſarie, and that I might in ſome meaſure contribute towards invigorating and confirming them; muſt not the impietie of conſiding in our own national ſtrength alone, or in merely human counſils be, in general, the ſame? ſtill, however, it is certain, that the divine favors are not, like thoſe of the thoughtleſs and wanton prodigal, conſered at random, and without a meaning; but according to an eſtabliſhed plan and order of operation. And this ſo far, as relates to the fate of nations, the prophet, in the name of the Lord, declares to be, as follows. “ At
 “ what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak” by the apparent tendencie of providential events,
 “ concerning a nation and concerning a
 “ kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and
 “ to deſtroy it; if that nation againſt whom
 “ I have pronounced, turn from their evil
 “ I will repent of the evil, that I thought
 “ to

“ to do unto them;” their affairs shall assume a new and more pleasing aspect. “ And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it : if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them;” that is, which present appearances may seem to indicate and forebode. The ancient heathens have expressed a just sense of the same connexion. And, though neither jewish nor heathen sage had insisted upon it, the uninterrupted experience and concurring testimonie of ages passed would sufficiently evince it. So that to the question, which immediately follows our text; “ why hast thou broken down her hedges, so that all they, who pass by the way do pluck her, the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it;” should such language be ever verified in us; what can be so justly said in answer, as that “ our iniquities have prevailed against us.” But would we not rather avert the evil, than by this or any other method, be able to account for it? In the principles then, that have been insisted upon we plainly see, where our

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fafetie lies. It seems utterly impossible, that poperie, the tremendous evils of which we may fo juftly confider, as exemplified in this language of the Pfalmift, fhould ever refume the afcendencie in thefe kingdoms, but by our own concurrence; or that concurrence be without our crime, or procede from ought, but the moft woful depravitie of manners, rendering us bafely indifferent to every thing, that is facred or venerable, good or great. And, on the other hand, the more we cultivate the principles of virtue, the more we love focietie and mankind, the greater will be our diftance from it, as we cannot but fo much the more ftrongly deteft it; and the firmer fecuritie muft posteritie have in our difpofition and manners, for the enjoyment of thofe glorious privileges, which providence has entrusted in our hands, not for ourfelves alone, but, as a pretious, ineftimable treafure to be by us conveyed to the generations, that are yet unborn. And, if unfaithfulnefs in any fingle trust, confifting only of fome comparatively trifling part of prefent worldly propertie be deemed, and juftly deemed, an iniquitie fo flagrant, and deteftable, how enormous muft be the crime of betraying posteritie into flaverie and ruin, and giving up the interefts of a whole nation

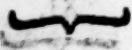
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at once? how loudly then do "wisdom and
"understanding lift up their voice in our
"streets?" what a strong address is here to
the social and generous feelings of our
minds, inculcating upon us in language
equally clear and explicit, whether we regard
our own immediate safety, as a people, or
the general interests of mankind, the renun-
ciation of our national vices, of all our per-
sonal iniquities, and the cultivating a sublime
and manly virtue? And does not the voice
of gratitude concur? gratitude, the peculiar
duty and employment of such a day,
this; that gratitude we owe to heaven,
which can no otherwise be expressed, than
by a cheerful observance of its laws? How
then can we better serve or befriend our
country, than by endeavoring to invigorate,
upon this occasion, these ingenuous senti-
ments, towards the supreme author and
source of all our national blessings, as well
as of our private and domestic comforts?
Sentiments, which, in proportion to the
degree of their prevalence in our minds, can-
not fail of prompting and inciting us to
the love and practice of that "righteousness,
"which" alone "exalteth a nation." Or,
what can more effectually tend to the cherish-



ing of such sentiments and dispositions in our breasts, than the comprehending as near, as may be, the importance of those national and public blessings, which are the ground and foundation of them, and the making these to be the subject of our affectionate and serious contemplation?

Having therefore with this view endeavored in the first place, to apply the phraseologie and language of the text, let us now more directly employ our thoughts for a while, in considering poperie, as that grand, complicated, and universal evil, which of all others, that can be named or thought of, ought to be by us most ardently deprecated, and by every method, that human wisdom can dictate or human power supply, with an ultimate reference of ourselves to the supreme providence and care of heaven, averted. For most sincerely do I believe, that of all the evils, that ever yet infested human life, poperie, whether we consider it in its intrinsic nature and enormitic, whether we reflect upon the means, by which it is made to subsist amongst mankind, whether we view it in its vast extent, or in its long continuance, may, without any exaggerating figure, or strain of fancy, be spoken of, as being in all respects

spects and absolutely the worst. Not a single right is there of humanitie, which it does not invade; not a privilege or enjoyment of human life, which it does not totally blast, or dreadfully impair: not an affection naturally belonging to the human heart, which it does not corrupt. Even, as to external, private propertie, its direct and natural tendencie, is at once, to impede the acquisition, to destroy the balance, and, at the same time, to render the possession of it to the last degree precarious. These are its genuine effects, in consequence of that multiplicitie of religious orders, which it appoints to be maintained, some in pomp and magnificence, others in indolence and affected beggarie: of that amazing and stupid reverence, which it creates, in the minds of its votaries, for the priest, those arbitrarie penances, which it allows him to injoin, and that judicial power, which it attributes to the absolution he pronounces; by virtue of which investiture and privileges he obtains the intire command of the wealth and riches of those, whom it constitutes his spiritual dependents: of that despotic power in princes, which it never fails to encourage, so far as can be consistent with, or in any degree subservient to,
the

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the superior claims of the sacred order : and lastly, of those perpetual exhausters of wealth and money, indulgences for sin, and masses for souls. In these allegations we are amply supported by undeniable facts, and the records of historie. Poperie has, in the most literal sense “ turned a fruitful land into barrenness.” And, even, when this our country, was in the state of its highest devotion to the Roman see, one of the principal objects of the legislature, was to restrain the insolence and check the encroachments of the papal power, which must otherwise have absolutely drained off all the wealth of the nation. And from these incontestable facts it appears, that by the most direct and natural tendencie of its principles, it must sap the foundations of civil libertie. It is itself founded upon the principles of tyrannie ; and it is for its interest, to encourage it in princes, so far, as by its own superior influence, it can controle their despotic power over the subject. Accordingly it never fails to insult and trample even upon kingly authoritie, whenever it has the opportunitie of displaying itself with safetie in this highest effort of that supremacie over all temporal power, which it ascribes to the Roman pontiff. The understanding

understanding of mankind it absolutely en-
flaves and triumphs over by those absurd
and senseless tenets, the belief of which,
under the severest penalties it enforces, and
by peremptorily forbidding the exercise and
use of it. Thus iniquitously does it deprive
men of that high, angelic privilege, which
God and nature designed them of being ra-
tional creatures, and of enjoying the con-
templation and search of truth. And as for
the “ scriptures, which were written for our
“ use, that thro’ patience and” the “ com-
“ fort of them we might have hope,” by its
pretended infallibilitie, by its usurped autho-
ritie over the faith and consciences of man-
kind, by that implicit veneration, which it
requires to be paid to tradition, by exalting
one particular church into mistress and
sovereign over all the rest, and by restrain-
ing, under the severest penalties, the read-
ing and examination, it does, in a man-
ner, totally defeat the original intention, of
them; obliging men, in effect, to be in name
and profession only christians, without en-
joying any one privilege or blessing naturally
belonging to that character. And even as
to learning more generally considered, it en-
courages it in a few, only for the sake of
promoting

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promoting more effectually, amongst mankind at large, the cause of ignorance and delusion. A zeal for truth and the love of souls it converts, by its execrable magic and forceries, into treasons, massacres, bloodshed, curses, and damnation. In these particulars it is easie to see, what an enemy it must be to the social interests of mankind. Of this too its persecuting principles are a proof too flagrant to be insisted upon. To which likewise we may add, that consummate piece of popish policie, auricular confession, purposely intended to subserve the views of papal ambition, and of defeating the best and worthiest designs, that happen at any time to interfere with it. As we cannot but suppose it to have been originally intended for answering these views, there can be, no doubt, of its being made, in fact, subservient to them. And, that it might operate more effectually to this end, it is made even necessarie to salvation, and the inward penitence of the mind itself asserted, and in solemn council decreed, to be ineffectual without it. By this means the church becomes privy to the most interesting transactions of mankind, and princes themselves are held in awe. And there was certainly
but

but little absurditie, tho' the most astonish-
ing insolence, in that boast, which was once
made by a certain holy father; "that with
" his God in his hand, and his king upon
" his knees, there was nothing, which he
" had not in his power to effect." Here
too might be alleged the injoining upon so
great a number of its votaries a monastic
life, and thus secluding them both from the
natural satisfactions and offices of societie.
nay more, the council of Trent expressly
pronounces an anathema upon all in general,
who pretend to say, that marriage is better
than celibacie. As to religion, in the more
distinct and separate view of it, not only has
poperie been in fact the source of the greatest
corruptions in it; but, according to its pe-
culiar nature and genius, it must ever abet
them. Religion in the truth and puritie of
her doctrines, cannot but bear an unfriendly
aspect upon the secularitie of its aims. And
on this account it is, that a free and rational
examination of religion, by which only the
original simplicitie of its principles can be
maintained, is in the popish communion
so strictly prohibited. And as to morals so
nearly and essentially allied both to religion
and the social interests of mankind, what can
more

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more directly tend to sap and undermine all moral principles and obligations whatsoever, than that priestly absolution, which the church of Rome affirms, not to be a mere simple declaration, but a judicial and decisive act; that inordinate attachment to the external rites and ceremonies of religion, which the whole tenor of its ecclesiastical discipline is calculated to encourage; dispensations for perjury and other crimes on certain conditions to be procured; and the doctrine of transferable merit, to be dispensed out of the treasury of the church, and by the sale of indulgences, to those, who are able to make the purchase; or the noted maxim, "that faith is not to be kept with heretics." If not with an heretic, why, with any other man? or how easily may any one by virtue of this maxim, absolve himself, upon any particular occasion, even without the assistance of the priest, only by pronouncing a man to be an heretic, as interest or fancy may incline. And especially to this purpose is to be recollected her making the celebration of the mass, to be strictly a propitiatory sacrifice for sin and of an equal virtue, as an atonement, with respect to the dead, as to the living. And it is for the convenient and salutary

salutarie use of it, in the case of the former, that the doctrine of purgatorie seems to have been chiefly intended. Upon these few par-

ticulars I have thus briefly descanted, not only from an apprehension, that there may be something of the spirit of poperie still remaining even in this protestant countrie, though passing under some different name, but also, because, if fame says true, as in this instance, I believe it may, though so often convicted of being a liar, the interest even of downright and absolute poperie itself is gaining ground among us. But God forbid, that popish emissaries should at length, and for want of zeal on our part, be able by the insinuating arts of conversation, and by the gentle and almost indiscernible influences of pretended friendship, to effect that, which, through the good providence of God, our popish adversaries have never yet been able by the deepest conspiracies, or even by the efforts of royal power itself, to accomplish.

“ Return, we beseech thee, o God of hosts,
“ look down from heaven and behold and
“ visit this vine, and the vineyard, which
“ thy right hand has planted, and the
“ branch, that thou madest strong for thy-
“ self. Let thine hand be upon the man
“ of

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“ of thy right hand,” our most gracious
 sovereign king George, “ upon the son of
 “ man, whom thou hast made strong for
 “ thyself.”---“ So will not we go back
 “ from thee: quicken us, and we will call
 “ upon thy name. Turn us again, o Lord
 “ God of hosts; cause thy face to shine, and
 “ we shall be saved.”

The

The DEVOUT PATRIOT.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the OLD JEWRY,

FEBRUARY 18, 1759.

Being the Sunday following a GENERAL FAST.

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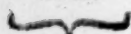
S E R M O N X I I .

P S A L M X X V I I I . 9 .

*Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed
them also, and lift them up for ever.*

IT is the exprefs injunction of the apostle, not only, that “ in every thing we give
“ thanks;” but that “ in every thing”
likewise we do “ by prayer and supplication
“ make known our requests unto God.”
Undoubtedly he meant in every thing, that
could be a proper subject of thanksgiving,
and that can naturally, and with reason, be
made the matter of our supplications to the
sovereign Deitie. But who can question,
whether our national and public concerns
must not fall within the compass of this
limitation? are not national blessings as
truly derived from God, as any of those,
Y 2 which

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which we may distinguish under the name of personal or domestic? and are they not to each individual as valuable as these? or with what propriety can we claim the character of universal benevolence, if the happiness of our country, as an extended, public interest, has no share in our affections? nay, with what consistencie can any British protestant pretend either to the love of God, or of his Saviour; whose heart is not warm and fervent in the cause of his country so apparently involving in it the puritie and honor of religion, the supreme object of which is God, together with the simplicitie of that christian faith, of which his adorable Savior has been the founder? shall we then never make this the theme of our discourses, but when called upon by public authoritie? or what consistencie can there be in giving our national concerns a constant share in our public prayers, and almost as constantly forgetting them in our sermons? None, however, can, I think dispute, the propriety of such a topic now: now that the echo of those humble supplications, which, in conjunction with the whole communitie of the land, we have been presenting before God, in behalf of our country, has scarcely ceased
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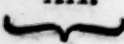
to sound in our ears; and I hope, the impression of them, upon our hearts not yet been effaced. To second and enforce the laudable views of that solemnity, is what I propose in the present discourse, presuming, that such a design may be in some measure happily answered, or at least, not improperly pursued, by treating upon this passage of the psalmist in the following manner.

In the first place, I will endeavor to explain the sense and import of this prayer, or humble petition offered up to the Almighty, in a brief consideration of the several particulars contained in it.

Secondly, shew with what abundant reason we may adopt it for our own, and then in the

Third place, suggest a few hints as to that spirit or temper of mind, with which it ought to be presented at the foot-stool of sovereign majesty.

But before I proceed to these particulars, it may not be amiss to consider, in a word or two, the character or description of the people, in whose behalf it was originally addressed to heaven by the psalmist. They were his country-men, or the nation of the Israelites. And these, not only in the text itself, but frequently

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throughout the sacred writings are spoken of as God's "peculiar people," "his inheritance," "his chosen seed," and the like. for which kind of language there is a foundation easily to be discerned in the peculiar conduct of divine providence towards them. In a very singular manner had it appeared for the defence of their liberties against the oppression of Pharoah, and for the preservation of their persons, during their passage through the wilderness. Not but that, through the goodness of the same divine providence many other nations of the world have been enabled to preserve, and to enjoy their liberties, and to make provision for their personal and domestic wants, as well as they; yet not in that miraculous manner, not with that "outstretched arm" of the Almighty, as in the case of the Israelites. This people likewise the sovereign ruler of the universe made use of, as the instrument of his righteous vengeance in punishing the Canaanites. And, tho' there are not wanting frequent instances of the like kind in the historie of the ancient heathens: yet still there is a difference, a peculiaritie apparent in that miraculous method, by which the Israelites were enabled to

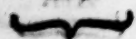
to pursue their conquest of them. And then as to religion, how eminently were they distinguished from other nations and people of the world by worshipping the true God of the universe in a manner wholly free from idolatrie. They were by public profession, and as a bodie politic, his “people” in this highly distinguishing and peculiar way. And they had become so in consequence of that series of miracles we have been speaking of. Thus it was, that he had “chosen them, “out of all the people of the earth, to set “his name amongst them.” The Israelites themselves indeed were apt to carry the idea of their national peculiaritie much farther; and vainly to imagine, that they were as much distinguished by their title to the divine favor, and to the blessings of a future world, as they confessedly were by that dispensation of divine providence, under which they lived at present. Yet is this a matter not at all depending upon the external privileges we enjoy, be they in the nature of them ever so singular and extraordinarie, but upon every one’s individual and personal character. Nor could any particular Israelite fare the better in relation to these heavenly and future blessings, on account of his being

one of God's peculiar people in the sense, that has been already given of that term; but only in proportion to the degree, in which the internal and moral purposes of religion had been answered in the temper and disposition of his own mind. "He, " says the apostle, is not a Jew, who is one " outwardly" alone, " neither is that circumcision, which is" merely " outward " in the flesh." That is, no man is either the better or the worse in a moral view, or relatively to the divine acceptance, on account of these, or of any other external denominations or distinctions. " But he is a " Jew, who is one inwardly; and circumcision," the only circumcision, that can be effectual for our obtaining the favor and approbation of the Almighty, " is that of " the heart; in the spirit, and not in the " letter, whose praise is not of men, but of " God." And an Israelite, whilst, as such, he was in the number of God's " chosen " seed," and, by virtue of external privileges, one of his " peculiar people," might yet, with respect to the divine favor and his future interests, be in a state to the last degree wretched and forlorn. And an idolatrous heathen might have more virtue, nay, and

more of pietie too, than many a Jew, who, though he had never bowed the external knee to Baal, might yet have his heart wholly averſe from the genuine ſentiments and feelings of devotion, and be a ſlave to the vileſt and moſt abominable paſſions. Nor does it appear in fact from the hiſtorie of the Jews compared with that of other nations, that they were a people generally more virtuous. They could not therefore be God's peculiar people relatively to any peculiar intereſt, that they had in the bleſſings of another life, but only on account of their external and preſent privileges. And in a ſenſe like this, may not we alſo, of this thrice-happie nation be with reaſon and propriety characteriſed as ſuch? are we not, both by our civil and religious liberties moſt highly and eminently diſtinguiſhed among the ſeveral kingdoms, ſtates, and empires of the world? And, though we have not been inveſted with them by miracle, yet are they by no means to be looked upon, as being leſs properly or immediately, on this account the bleſſings of heaven, or favors conſered upon us by the moſt high. are not we, think you, as much indebted to God for our daily bread, as they were for their repaſt, who

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who had been by miracle supplied with it?

In like manner are our national blessings as directly and immediately derived from him, though not a single miracle appears to have been wrought for the preservation of them, as were any privileges enjoyed of old by the people of Israel. And this is an observation, which I the rather chuse to insist upon; because some events, that have been highly conducive to the welfare and happiness of this nation, have sometimes been represented, as being at least very nearly miraculous; with the pious view, I doubt not, of heightening our obligations to the divine goodness on account of those blessings, that have been the result of them. Whereas in fact we are equally obliged to that goodness, even supposing none of the events referred to, to have been in any degree of that peculiar kind, but to have proceeded wholly from natural and secundarie causes; all of which do as much depend, for their influence and operation, upon a divine energie, as even miracles themselves. Those therefore, who cannot see the miracle, ought not for that reason to overlook the mercie; which is equally great and ought with equal ardor of praise and devotion to be celebrated, whether,
in

in the manner of its being conferred, miraculous or not.

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And now as to the petition itself contained in the text, it is not only very comprehensive in its meaning; but there is likewise, if I mistake not, a very beautiful gradation to be observed in the order and construction of it. The Psalmist takes rise from the lowest instances of national happiness, and thus advances in his pious contemplations, thro' the several intervening blessings, to the perfection and consummate glorie of all. "Save thy people, o Lord, and bless thine inheritance; feed them also, and lift them up for ever."

In the first place he prays, that his country might be delivered from those many dreadful and dire calamities, that sometimes befall whole nations at once. "Save thy people." Save them from the rage of intestine war: save them from civil dissensions, and from the inroads and devastations of an insulting enemy: save them from those many inconveniencies and hardships, which attend a state of war and hostilitie with foreign powers, even though carried on at the remotest distance from their native borders. But, if in the course and order of thy providence

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providence the sword must needs be drawn, avert from us, o Lord, the triumphs of our enemies; fight thou our battles for us; and, when our host “shall go out to meet the
“enemie, do thou hear their prayer and
“supplication, and maintain their cause;” and speedily, if it be thy blessed will, put a stop to such unnatural commotions amongst the people and kingdoms of the earth. Save us from “the pestilence, that walketh in
“darkness,” and from “the destruction,” whether by inundation or famine, or fire, or desolating earthquake, that wasteth at “noon-
“day.” Neither let treacherie or faction, ambition or venalitie corrupt our public councils. But

Secondly, a nation may be wholly free from the several calamities I have been speaking of, and yet far from enjoying the fulness of national prosperitie. Without treacherie or faction, ambition or venalitie, the flow of public happiness may be very much obstructed by a varietie of grievances visible enough in their effects, though the spring and causes of them may as yet be latent and unknown. We may have no enemie in open arms against us, and yet more than one, that may by secret measures
of

of policie, be undermining our national interest. Famine, strictly so called, may not invade our borders; and yet far may we be from plentie: and great may be the inconveniencies arising either from such a scarcitie of provision, or from the difficultie of purchasing it, or from its unwholsome nature and qualities. Trade may not be lost, yet subject to many embarrassments, at present not a little distressing, and perhaps highly formidable in their almost certain consequences. In fullest peace with all the neighboring powers, we may yet be far from having that influence, or appearing with that dignitie among them in our national character, by which we may heretofore have been distinguished, or which is, however, in itself, a thing so much to be desired. Or, farther still, a nation may enjoy peace and plentie to the full, have a flourishing trade and potent allies; and yet be, after all, but a nation of slaves: or they may enjoy civil libertie, and yet labor under the dreadful evil of religious blindness and bondage. Now it is in opposition to such a national state, as this, and to these several circumstances of national distress, which we have just been enumerating, as well as to the calamitous scenes referred to
under

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under the former head, that the Psalmist prays in behalf of his country, that God would bless, as well as save it; “ that *their* “ garners might be full, affording all manner of store, that *their* sheep might bring forth thousands and ten thousands in *their* “ streets; that *their* oxen *might* be strong to “ labor, that there be no breaking in, nor “ going out;” neither invasions nor emigrations, “ that there *might* be no complaining “ in *their* streets;” that, instead of being “ a proverb and a bye-word among the “ people of the earth,” the most distant nations might recognize their fame; and that, as God had, in the former indulgence of his providence, invested them with those invaluable liberties and privileges, both civil and religious, which afforded so sweet a favor to every other national and public blessing, he would not now suffer them to be lost, or even in any degree impaired. But the psalmist adds

Thirdly, in his pious and public-spirited request; “ feed them also.” plentie of provision both for the sustenance of man and beast, or the being *fed* in this immediate and literal sense, must needs have been included, as we have supposed, under the two former

former petitions, “fave” and “blefs” them. We may therefore naturally conclude, that something distinct from these must have been intended by our royal poet in this other expression; “feed them *also*.” Now kings, or the supreme civil governor in any national communitie, by whatever denomination specified, are in scripture sometimes, and in Homer often, spoken of as the shepherds of their people. I apprehend therefore, that in this clause of the text he meant to pray for the securitie of those several blessings, that have been already enumerated, by the wise and regular administration of civil government. A people may be in actual, present possession of the highest privileges and immunities, that can be by any nation whatever enjoyed; and yet have little or no securitie for them in the government, under which they live: nay, that very government, may sadly threaten the loss of them. Thus in the reign of our second James, the privileges we enjoyed as a nation were inestimable, we were a free and a protestant people. But instead of protecting us, as he should have done, and as he had sworn to do, in the possession of these invaluable blessings, he would willingly have blasted and destroyed them;

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them; and to this very end was the whole force and sway of his government manifestly directed. Instead of feeding us, he would gladly have fed upon and devoured us; feasted himself and glutted his priests upon the costly sacrifice of our laws and liberties, rights and religion. So that in this distinct petition of our text, David did indeed pray for himself, he being then the reigning prince of Israel, and in so doing for his people too. His petition was in effect, that under his auspicious reign, and through the influence of his mild and equitable government, their plentie, their peace, their commerce, their laws their liberties, and their religious rights might be inviolably secured. Yet in the ardor of his patriot spirit, he could not stop even here, but adds still farther in the

Fourth place; “and lift them up.” We are apt in our national character to be too much elated or “lifted up” in a way of vain and presumptuous confidence: and this especially upon any signal victorie obtained or acquisition made, as if our own arm had saved us, and we were sure, when ever we pleased, of being able to do the like again. But this, we may be certain, was not the thing here intended

intended by the psalmist. The very language of prayer condemns every thing of this sort, and directly implies the contrarie. If a people could by their own national strength and prowess, independently of the God of nations and king of kings, from whom alone indeed cometh victorie and honor, rescue themselves in time of danger, trample their enemies under their feet at pleasure, and ensure all the desirable blessings of a communitie, why should they pray at all? And, if they cannot, what more natural, than that the continuance of such blessings should be humbly sought for at his hands? Nay more, what nation is there under heaven so happie in its privileges, its laws and liberties, in the form of its government in general, or in the immediate administration of it, that is not capable of having its felicitie in these several respects heightened and enlarged? And this is what, I suppose, the psalmist to have intended in this additional petition; "and lift them up." in it he prays, not only, that all the fore-mentioned blessings might be continued, and the people, by his own righteous government, protected in the possession of them; but that their immunities, their privileges, their honor, as a nation, might

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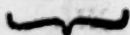
might be still farther extended; that they might be more pious, more prosperous, and more renowned than ever. More pious, I say; for this we must needs suppose from the general tenor of his writings to have been included in the petition, as the very foundation of those several blessings, for which he here supplicates the throne of everlasting mercie. Where loyaltie to God is wanting, or in other words a fear of his name, an awe of his authoritie, a reverence for his laws, there, in proportion, must national honor, justice, corage, peace, and libertie decline. How absurd would it be to imagine, that a people might be altogether as happie, even though the greatest part of them were disaffected to their earthly sovereign, as they could be, supposing the principle of sincere and inviolable allegiance to be generally prevalent among them? Yet what is any particular or national societie, but a small province, or district rather, of the divine universal government? how then can disaffection to this highest authoritie be without its fatal effects? must not the measures of the divine government be, at least, as friendly to the interests of a national community, as the immediate administration of any

any earthly prince? must we not conclude its laws to be as salutarie, as any that have ever been invented by human policie? certainly then the breach of these laws and the want of conformitie in temper and disposition to these measures of divine government, must needs be as inconsistent with national welfare and public happines, as any of the more direct, immediate acts of disloyaltie to an earthly prince or disobedience to human authoritie. But

Fifthly, the Psalmist did not, it seems, think it enough to offer up to heaven his pious wishes, in behalf of the Israelites, his countrie-men, even though thus generously dilated, with a view to his own times alone; but makes it his humble and equally fervent request to God, that he would “ bless, “ feed, and lift them, up for ever.” And indeed, how is it possible for any man in the generous ardor of his soul to pant after national libertie, peace, and glorie, in behalf of his contemporaries, and not wish, at the same time, for the transmission of the like blessings to posteritie? will not slavery, and superstition, the united tyrannie of civil and ecclesiastic power, be the same inexpressibly dreadful evil to them, should they ever,

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through our remissness and corruption, be entailed upon them, as they would have been to us, had we been in any such manner by our fore-fathers enslaved? and are we not united to them by the same common ties of nature, as with those of the present day? Not to extend our kind affectionate wishes to posterity, is as manifest a defect in the spirit of benevolence, as to confine the exercise of it towards our contemporaries within the narrow limits of neighborhood or party, friendship or alliance. And it is easy to imagine, what a prodigious accession of force and efficacy must needs be derived to all our present efforts in the generous cause of liberty and truth, from considerations of this nature, when once they come to be by the mind affectionately embraced. So that we ought for our own sakes to love posterity, as well as for theirs to be vigorous and resolute in defending ourselves.

Thus have I endeavored to illustrate the several parts of this truly patriot-prayer. And I have done it in such a manner, as to leave but little occasion for enlarging upon the

Second thing proposed, which was to shew with what ample reason we, the inhabitants of Great Britain, may adopt it for our own.

The Devout Patriot.

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own. The general principles, upon which we are to do this, have been already pointed out in our introductorie remarks. And here it will be our only business to illustrate those reflections by hinting at a few particulars. We see how fervently, how copiously, and with what enlarged affections of soul, the psalmist prays for his countrymen and fellow-citizens, of the kingdom of Israel. and are not we now possessing the same precious liberties which they enjoyed? are not we, as well as they, governed by law and equitie, instead of despotic will? have we not a far more glorious dispensation of religion to inspire and animate our zeal? is not our trade and commerce vastly more extensive and interesting? are not our enemies as numerous? are they not as bitter and implacable? or what, in short, could the Israelites have to fear from a philistine armie, or a moabitish invasion, which is not to be equally dreaded by us from the triumphs of popish policie and the gallic sword; if ever that tremendous evil should, in the order of divine providence, and for the punishment of our impenitence, be permitted? and are not we upon that providence as much dependent as they? do we know of any other arm,

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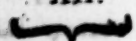


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that can save us, but that of the Almighty alone? if not, to him, let us with united and humble voice prefer our petition; “ save us, o Lord, and bless thine inheritance, feed them also, and lift them up for ever.” And “ let all the people say. “ Amen.” With a request like this we may “ come boldly to the throne of grace.” When we pray for God’s “ people and inheritance,” in the sense, that has been already given of those terms, we pray for all, that is precious, venerable, and lovely in the eye of man; and confident we may be, that it is a prayer acceptable in the sight of heaven, supposing it to be, on our part, offered up with such affections of mind as naturally correspond to it.

And it was, as you will remember, the business of our third head to specify, what kind of spirit it is, that should animate such a request, when presented before God. And undoubtedly in the first place, when we pray for the continuance, for the encrease and advancement of our national privileges and liberties, it should be done with hearts full of gratitude and praise for the original possession of them, and for those many events of a propitious providence, by which they have

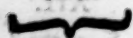
have been from time to time secured to us. Whatever foundation there is for prayer, in reference to future blessings, it must needs imply an equal foundation for gratitude and praise in reference to those, which we do at present enjoy, and which, through so long a series of providential mercies, have been conveyed to us. What then can be more natural, than, that, whilst we are directing our pious wishes towards succeeding times, we should after the same devout manner be employing our thoughts, in fervent gratitude, “ upon “ the years of old ?” in this way may we ourselves enjoy, with no small delight, the blessings that were immediately bestowed upon those, whose bodies have been long since mouldered in the grave, but whose names are living in the grateful sense we have of that generous and heroic spirit, with which they exerted themselves for their countrie and for mankind. But how indecent, how shocking, how impious and profane, to celebrate their praises, who were only the instruments of a divine hand in defending the liberties we now enjoy, and in aggrandizing the honors of our nation, with an utter insensibility of that divine benigntie itself, to which these very blessings are to

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be ultimately ascribed! should not a prayer of this sort likewise be accompanied with serious thoughts of personal reformation? personal I say; for, though my meaning is to point out the importance of that, which is national; yet how is this to be effected, but by every ones hearty renunciation of his own iniquities? It was by the valor and pietie of our ancestors, that light and libertie have been continued down to our times. how then are we to transmit them to succeeding ages, but by cultivating a like spirit in ourselves? So that it can be but with little sinceritie, that we adopt the prayer of the text, and yet remain unaffected with the lustre of these examples. Or what is the design of praying for national blessings? not that we may at any rate extort them out of the Almighty's hands; but to dispose our own minds to those virtues, with which he has connected them. Great as are our national privileges, and notwithstanding that generous plea, with which they furnish us, when addressing the throne of heaven, in behalf of our native land, it is not the enjoyment but the improving of them, that will be our most solid ground of confidence in the mercies of the most high. What was the

the fate of Capernaum? it was even "lifted
" up to heaven" by the eminence of its privileges, but, for not improving them, degraded into the lowest "hell" of infamie and ruin. As an horse, an armie, a navie, are all of them vain and frivolous instruments of safetie without the favor and blessing of the Almighty, in like manner must even our religious privileges, nay, our very prayers themselves, be wholly unavailable for the obtaining of this divine favor, if not accompanied with that "righteousness," which alone, according to the established and immutable order of God's sovereign providence, "exalteth a nation." Pray for health, and what will that avail you, without your own endeavors to preserve it? Pray for prosperitie in your private affairs, renouncing at the same time all attention to them; and try whether you can by that means grow rich. Now, what the regular indulgence of our bodily appetites is to health, what diligence and oeconomie are to worldly prosperitie, that exactly are reformed and upright manners to a state. Let not then a people hope to be saved by prayer alone. But, though thus singly and apart, it can be of no avail towards recommending us to the favor of
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the Almighty, it is nevertheless the natural and divinely appointed means of qualifying us for it, by cherishing in our minds those humble, penitent, and pious dispositions; which in proportion to the sinceritie and ardor, with which we cultivate them, cannot fail of having the most desirable and important influence upon our civil connections and public character, “ pray therefore for
“ the peace of Jerusalem; and may they
“ prosper, who love her.”

NATIONAL

NATIONAL GRATITUDE
Enforced.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

NOVEMBER 29, 1759.

Being the Day of General Thanksgiving for our late
S U C C E S S E S in W A R and P L E N T I F U L
H A R V E S T.

SEERMON

Preached at BARBICAN

November 20, 1750.

During the Day of General Thanksgiving for our late
Success in War and Peace
HARRIS

S E R M O N XIII.

I. KINGS VIII. 66.

And they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

IT is a maxim, that has been long since established even upon the venerable SERM.
XIII. authoritie of Solomon himself, the royal personage spoken of in this passage, that there is “ a time to laugh,” as well as “ a time to mourn.” And it is, as I presume, no small part of a minister’s dutie, to observe and distinguish aright between these different seasons, and to enforce that peculiar temper, which they respectively demand. When not long ago there seemed to be a general apprehension, and that but too justly

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justly founded, of national calamities and distress, and of danger, on every side impending, and threatening to blast for ever the honors of our native land; I then thought it incumbent upon me to awaken and alarm your fears, and in that way to contribute my part towards averting the occasion of them. I could not but cry out in the “ bitterness of my soul” within me; “ o! that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” I could not but endeavor, in these our solemn meetings, to communicate this anguish of my own heart to yours, judging, that it might be salutary in its effects, however painful for the present moment. “ For Zion’s sake and for Jerusalem’s sake I could not hold my peace,” or forbear to adopt the lamenting, melancholic strain of the prophet. “ How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion,” my dear native country for rich and eminent in its religious privileges, “ with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger. The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitation

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“ tions of Jacob, and has not pitied: he
“ hath thrown down in his wrath, the
“ strong holds of the daughter of Judah: he
“ hath brought them down to the ground: he
“ hath polluted the kingdom and the princes
“ thereof. he has cut off in his fierce anger
“ all the horn,” that is, the strength or
power “ of Israel: he has drawn back his
“ right hand from before the enemy, and
“ he burned against Jacob, like a flam-
“ ing fire, which devoureth round about.”

Nay, scarcely could I refrain from that still
more desponding language, if possible, of the
psalmist; “ will the Lord cast off for ever;
“ will he be favorable no more? is his
“ mercie clean gone for ever?” But to hold
the same language now, would surely be in
no small degree preposterous and absurd.
Now, that God has “ put a song, a new,”
unusual, “ song into our mouths” by such a
series of signal triumphs gained over our ene-
mies, that, “ a way-faring man, though a
“ fool, cannot err therein,” or fail to discern
the tokens of heaven’s smiling and propitious
“ countenance lifted up upon us.” do we not
even stand astonished at the unexpected and
almost unexampled success, which in so short
a space of time, and in so many various forms,

but

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but yet of such high and eminent importance in all, has followed upon the just and necessary efforts of our national strength against the invaders of our peace and libertie? are not our enemies at this very instant “ hanging down their heads like a bulrush?” surely then this must be the time for us, for every honest-hearted Briton, to rejoice. are not they “ saying among themselves” compelled by the unwelcome force of truth, “ the Lord has done great things for them?” ought not then our own “ mouths to be filled with laughter, and our tongues with singing?” shall we not gladly, in obedience to the royal mandate, “ enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise, be thankful unto him, and bless his name?”

In times of general despondencie and danger, when the severe and terrible “ judgments of God are abroad in the land,” it is universally looked upon, as horridly profane and impious insensibilitie, not to be alarmed. And to be unaffected by the mercies of heaven must at least carry in it equal impietie. Nor can we well conceive of a more dishonorable imputation upon the character of the sovereign Deitie, than, whilst we
acknowledge

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acknowledge his presiding power and directing hand in the calamities of the public, to celebrate our national successes, with such an absolute forgetfulness of his providence, as if in reality it had been no way concerned in them. what is this, but ascribing to him rigor and severity, as being the only attributes of his nature, in direct contradiction to those declarations of scripture, so apparently founded in the original discoveries, that have been made of his perfections to mankind in the visible and established order of nature, that "judgment is his strange work," and that the severities of his afflicting hand are never exercised, either towards individuals or a community, but in subserviency to those benevolent and gracious purposes, that are fundamental in the laws and constitution of his moral government. Nor are we so much as once to imagine, that it is from his alarming and awful judgments alone, that righteousness is to be learned, or that his "goodness," will not, as effectually, would we permit it only to have its natural and genuine influences upon the mind, "lead us to repentance." I know indeed, how apt we are to make an estimation of fear, as being by far the most

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operative

operative and deeply efficacious principle in our natures; and, in religion particularly, to look upon it as, in a manner, the only passion, from which any considerable or lasting effects are to be expected. A suggestion surely, this last, highly dishonorable, either to religion or to ourselves; and, if I am not mistaken, carrying in it too a manifest contrariety to the peculiar nature of the passion itself. Which is indeed for the wisest reasons, and these too obvious to be particularly insisted upon, violent, strong, and deeply impressive, during the presence of the object, that excites it, but, which subsides of course upon the removal of it; having then answered its end, and being no longer necessary. Whereas let gratitude but once possess the mind, even though it be on account only of some temporarie and comparatively transient benefit conferred, there is nothing in the nature of the passion itself, that can hinder its remaining in the breast for ever, as a warmly inciting and vigorous principle of action. Considered, however, in a religious view, there cannot be so much, as a momentarie remission of those divine favors, which are the natural incentives of it. on the contrarie, there is in fact an incessant renewal of

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of them. Here therefore, at least; especially, when we take in the still farther consideration of the absolute freeness of the divine benignitie to man, in connection with the incomparable greatness and highest importance of those blessings we receive from it, it is a principle, that might certainly be expected to operate with at least equal efficacie, as that of fear, were it but equally cherished in the mind. What, however, if upon this great occasion, we were to make the experiment, and generously aim, at least, at convincing mankind, by the specimen and example of our own future conduct, that “the voice of thanksgiving and of joy, “that is now in all our tabernacles,” is not less happily adapted for influencing our public manners, than if it had been the voice of an angry Deitie, pronounced in “lightnings and thunder, in blackness and darkness, and a horrible tempest?”

It is upon these principles, that I would now procede to a more distinct and fuller application of the text to the design of our present assembling together. It exhibits to us the character of the jewish people in the height of their prosperitie. And, as the wisdom even of Solomon himself could

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not, independently of the temper and disposition of his subjects, have effected that national felicitie and renown, which has in the annals of historie so eminently distinguished his reign, it will be of the highest importance to attend to it, as the character by which to form and regulate our own. And as to the still more particular and special occasion that is in it refered to, this was the dedication of the temple by that wise and magnificent prince in person, and the high festivitie and mirth, with which the grand solemnitie had been observed. A temple, erected to the honor of the one supreme and eternal Deitie, in opposition to the idolatrie of the surrounding nations: a temple, which they now enjoyed the happy libertie of erecting, in opposition to that dreadful state of vassalage, both civil and religious, under which they had so long groaned in Egypt: a temple, the building of which had been favored amidst all the advantages of the profoundest peace; and which the wealth and opulence of the nation had enabled them to finish with every possible circumstance of elegance and grandeur. And, in these several particulars we have the genuine principles, which ought to animate our minds upon the present

present memorable occasion, very accurately defined. For, though the immediate reason of this day's solemn meeting be the triumphs of war, and the signal victories, that have been gained by us over our once insulting, but now, as we hope, abased enemies; it is not surely, on account of these events separately and in themselves considered, not merely for having spilled their blood, for having slaughtered them by thousands in the avenging field of battle, for having ransacked their cities, plundered their towns and villages, laid waste their territories, and reduced such numbers of them to beggary and ruin, that we are now to present our praises to heaven, and our congratulations to one another. No; these are events, that in themselves considered, would rather fill our minds with horror and distress, deprecating, as we ought, in the humane and gentle spirit of our sovereign, this "effusion of christian blood." And to be pleased with them in this view alone, would be an unnatural, savage joy. But, when we consider them as events necessarily connected, in the present situation of things, with the securitie of our own inestimable liberties, as a people; as events, in all probabilitie, intended, in the

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order of divine providence, for strengthening the foundation of them, as events carrying in them the pleasing tokens of peace, to be once more and speedily restored both to our own and the other contending nations of Europe; restored too upon such a footing, as may give us a reasonable and fair presumption of its honorable continuance, and the long enjoyment of its blessings; in this view, it is just and natural, it is reasonable, it is worthy, both of our human and of our christian character, not merely to be pleased with, but even to exult in them. In the remaining part of this discourse, then, I shall endeavor

First, to give you some brief account of those great and truly joyful events, that have been the more direct and immediate occasion of our assembling together this day. After which I shall, by way of application, shew you, with what sentiments and temper it is, that we are to recollect them, as exemplified by the conduct of the Israelites recorded in our text.

First, I say, let us take a brief review of those great and signal events, that have been more immediately the happy occasion of our being now assembled together, for the exercise

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exercise of solemn praise and devotion before the throne of the divine, eternal majesty. These great events; such is the language I am even bound to use. For it is not a single victory or a few petty triumphs, that we are now called upon to celebrate; it is not the mere parade of arms: it is not the glittering, shewy phantom of military exploits, or the heroism of a day; but such solid impressions made, in the course of the present and immediately preceding year, upon the territories, upon the commerce, upon the very heart and vital spirit of our enemies, that will, even to the latest times, make this to be a distinguished period of glory and renown in the British annals, notwithstanding the so many great and signal instances of our national bravery, and of the terror given by our arms to that very power, we are now contending with, that are already recorded in them. It is not Europe and America alone, that resound our praise; we hear it echoed too from the Asiatic shore, and sands of Afric. And, that the welcome voice, thus assailing our ravished ear from every quarter of the world, may be the more distinctly heard, it will not be amiss to recount, in a word or two, those great events, that

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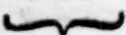
have conspired to signalize this propitious morn, with some general regard, at least, to the order of time in which they have respectively happened. In this manner with what high satisfaction is it, that we may look back to the preceding year, and recollect, how its pleasingly revolving months have been distinguished by the fame and lustre of our arms? This let the expulsion, out of our sovereign's foreign territories, of those hostile troops, that had so long been ravaging and despoiling them, and the respite given to his subjects there, after so long a series of hardships and sufferings, which an enraged and insolent enemy had made them to undergo; this let the important victory gained by his forces under the command of the illustrious prince of Brunswic at Creveldt, evince. In proof of it let me recall to your minds the acquisition of Senegal, so valuable in reference both to the extension and the securitie of our commerce. Let me then remind you of the surrender of Louisbourg to his majesty's forces under the command of Boscawen and Amherst, and the subjection of Cape Breton and its appendages to the British sovereigntie. A conquest, not only in itself so interesting, but rendered of
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so much higher importance still by the success we then had in reducing the naval power of France, as to excite the universal acclamations of our country, amply justified, by the senatorial honors, that were upon that occasion paid to the illustrious commanders, who conducted it. Within the same period it is, that we are to recount the damages done to their shipping and naval stores at St. Malo's, the demolition of Cherbourg, and the terror so long spread upon their native shores by the triumphant English flag; the reduction in America of the important fortresses of Frontenac and Duquesne, the advantages gained by the bravery of our naval commander in the eastern Indies, with the victorious honors of Prussia's monarch at Zorndoff, leaving fifteen thousand savage Russians slain on the field of battle. At the extremest close and almost latest hour of that memorable year, that it might wear the same happy complexion throughout, it was, that so considerable an accession was made to our former conquests in that other quarter of the world, by the surrender of the island of Goree in Africa. Nor has this present one been at all less remarkable, but, if possible, more conspicuous still by the
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lustre of its events and their happy aspect upon the prosperitie and honor of our British isle. How gloriously did we triumph on the plains of Minden! what a superioritie of adverse force! yet to what availing, but to aggrandize our victorie, and render the enemies fate more desperate! what confusion and embarrassment has been in all their councils since! what shame and disgrace in all their measures! what exasperation and rage! And, prior to this, how interesting and important the success of our military operations in the reduction of Guadaloupe and its dependencies to the dominion of the British scepter? but, alas, how should I find the time to fail me, were I more than in the slightest manner to mention the dispersion of the French fleet under their admiral La Clue; the important victories gained, such as those of Tullikau and Torgau, and the numerous sieges raised by our great allie, the king of Prussia? And as to our late American conquests, what indeed can better suit the rapiditie, with which they were carried on, than to remind you only in a single, passing word, of the reduction of Niagara, and the defeat of the enemies forces near that place; of Ticonderoga, after an unsuccessful,

cessful, but brave, attempt against it in the preceding year; of Crown-point abandoned by the enemy, and added to all our other conquests. But particularly are we called upon in our present solemnities, to commemorate that so signal victory gained in Canada, and the surrender of its capital, Quebec. An acquisition, which, whether we consider the importance of it in itself, or the amazing difficulties, that attended it, or the equally astonishing bravery and resolution, with which they were surmounted, cannot but be in a very special manner endeared to us; and endeared still more by the price it cost us, in the death of that accomplished warrior, who needed not the transient pomp of a public funeral, to proclaim his worth already engraven on all our hearts, but for whom, however, such monumental honors have been in the royal breast, and now, in parliament decreed; as may best inform posterity, how highly it was revered. And yet after all, that we have been hitherto recounting, how prodigiously must be the idea of our national character and prosperity enhanced, by the security, that has been given to our own trade, and annoyance to that of our enemies, by the presence only of our

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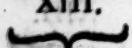
our fleets in the Mediterranean seas, by recollecting, how great a part of their naval force has been for so long a time rendered insignificant and harmless by the blocking up of their ports; or lastly, when I shall have just reminded you of those numerous captures, by which both their military strength and commercial interests have been not a little impaired, which have done so much honor to many British names by the courage and magnanimity, with which they were effected, and, which, should the sad necessity remain of sending forth “our host against the enemy,” give us so pleasing an hope, that there will not yet be wanting those, who in the several stations of command, that may be the reward of their present valor, will be ready by their own example to animate it to the pursuit of victory, even in contempt of all the thickest dangers of the field. But, amidst these ample honors, with which our arms have been crowned abroad, how justly have we been reminded, by our sovereign himself, of the remarkable and overflowing richness of our latest harvest; the very prospect of which could not but be so highly pleasing to us, as a balance to the peculiar difficulties and inconveniences of a state

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state of war. And now, that it is gathered, under every propitious smile of heaven, into our barns, it is not easy to conceive of any single consideration whatever, that can so much tend to reconcile our minds to the continuance of this hostile state, should the disposition of our enemies and the wisdom of our councils make it necessary. And yet there is a farther consideration upon this head, by no means to be omitted. And that is, that, notwithstanding all the ravages and desolations of war, that have been so deeply felt both by our enemies, by our allies, and in our distant colonies, we have enjoyed an undisturbed tranquillity in our native borders. This has not only for the present been the source of much sweet content; not only has it enabled us to prosecute our military designs with so much greater vigor and extent abroad, but must likewise give us the greatest satisfaction in the fair presumption, that, thro' the blessing of heaven upon our salutary and invigorated measures, this dreadful evil may be still averted from us, should the war be of necessity protracted, and notwithstanding even the heightened animosity of those, with whom we wage it. This, then, is some brief and cursory

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cursorie view, of those rich and glorious, those replete and ample blessings, for the solemn commemoration of which, we are this day met together. And it is now my business in the

Second place, to consider, with what sentiments and temper it is, that we should recollect them. And of this, as has been already hinted, we have an example pertinent and full to the purpose, in what we find related concerning the Israelites in the text.

In the first place it appears in general, that they were very far from being either stupidly insensible, or maliciously indifferent, to that high degree of national prosperitie and honor, which, under the royal influence and authoritie, they had now been celebrating in the solemnities of public devotion. Far were they from attending upon these in the way only of external form and decency. Far were they from that narrow, selfish disposition, for which stupiditie is the gentlest name; and which would have been prompting them to say, had they not indeed abhorred the indulgence of it; could they not with so much confidence have congratulated themselves upon having never feelled it; of what

what account is it to us, whether our coun-
trie flourish or be distressed; whether we or
our enemies shall prove in the end victorious,
whether it be theirs or ours to appear with
honor in the annals of fame, whether our
national interests be governed by a prince of
this character or of that, so long as we our-
selves do but enjoy our own domestic ease
and quiet. Far were they from allowing
themselves to disparage either the merits of
their countrymen or the blessings of heaven,
in the spirit of pride and arrogance, or of
prejudice and envy against any of those, that
might have been the instruments of their
good. But in the uncorrupted simplicities
of nature they entered with a generous ardor,
upon this great occasion, into those patriot
sentiments, which so well became it; and
without which it is indeed natural enough
to say of such services as these, “ what a
“ weariness are they.”

Still, however, they by no means allowed
themselves to be so idly captivated with the
ideas of a false, romantic patriotism, or by
such an absurd and inconsistent love of their
country, as to forget, that they had a king.
“ they blessed the king.” they rejoiced in a
free and orderly government, by which they
were

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were so happily secured against the extremes of licentious anarchie on the one hand, and the lamentable uniformitie, on the other, of being slaves alike. And this was a sentiment of so much importance to their happiness, that the more deeply they imbibed it, the more, undoubtedly, would their minds be reconciled to the necessary expences of government, and the more easily would any disturbance of spirit, on account of such, present, personal inconveniencies, to which its exigencies might at any time subject them, be prevented. . And not only did they thus express a just sense of the nature and importance of civil government in general; but they likewise “blessed,” in his own individual person and character, “the king,” who then swayed the scepter of their realm. They could not but esteem and revere him, as the great vice-gerent, the illustrious, appointed instrument of heaven, in defending their nation’s libertie and honor, in preserving its peace, extending its commerce, and striking terror upon all its foes. Nor could they forbear to congratulate a king thus beloved and honored, on account of his own personal and immediate share in the blessings of their countrie. And shall we be less sensible

sensible of the obligations, that are in this respect incumbent upon us? shall we not, on this joyful day, for which, under heaven, we are to him indebted, congratulate our sovereign, who has been so long the “father of his people,” on the encreasing glories of his name and splendor of his government? shall we not rejoice with him in the health and safetie of his familie? shall we not take our affectionate and grateful share in the pleasure, that his heart must now be feeling on account of that peace and tranquility, that has been so happily restored to his foreign subjects? And shall we not, according to a farther and well-known meaning of the original expression here made use of, “bless him” in offering up our fervent prayers to the Almighty, for the “lengthening out of his days,” for the peace of his throne, and for the still advancing dignitie of his imperial crown? shall we not comprehend in our ardent wish every branch of his illustrious familie? shall we not, in particular, make it our devoutest supplication before the throne of heaven, that in his royal highness the prince of Wales, whenever called to sway the British scepter, we may have a prince, whose highest ambition

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it shall be to govern upon those mild and equitable principles, that throw such a lustre upon the present reign, and to exhibit in his own with still increasing splendor, if so it may be, the virtues, that adorn it?

But it is observable in the third place, with respect to the Israelitish people, that having been for a whole week engaged in those grand, festival and sacred solemnities, which had been instituted, upon the occasion refered to in our text, “ they went home to “ their tents.” By no means are we to permit the effusions of public joy so to dissipate and dissolve the mind, as to indispose it for the offices of private life. Nor can even the devotional exercises, that are upon such occasions so necessary and becoming, be justly allowed, as an excuse for neglecting them. The contrary to this example in one respect was a capital error, at the memorable period of the restoration. The joy, which on that account diffused itself throughout the nation, degenerated at length into absolute licentiousness, and produced; that national bent and disposition, which principally characterised the succeeding reign, and which was that of wanton levitie. And happy for us perhaps it was, however fatal
to

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to him, that the king himself was so deeply infected by it. For had he not preferred a vile subjection to the tyrannie of his own lawless passions, to the being himself the tyrant of his people, a character however, which he would have gladly assumed, nothing could have given him a fairer opportunity, than this general levitie, for putting in execution a design so execrable. For what can more directly fit men for being villains in the state, than the having at once debauched their morals and ruined their fortunes by the inordinacies of private life? But then it is to be remembered in relation to the persons spoken of in the text, that, tho' "they went home to their tents," they did not leave either their patriotism or their devotion behind them. But "they went," as we are told, "joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness, that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people." Though we are not to put out so far into the boundless ocean of a public interest, which might soon overset our little bark, as to forget the connections of a domestic and private station, so neither are we at any time to be so much engrossed by these more contracted interests,

as not to remember the “ peace of Jeru-
 “ salem.” But our regards to each, are to
 be considered as reciprocal and mutually
 assisting principles. And that man must
 have a strangely absurd understanding, or
 else an horridly selfish heart, who can think,
 that the cherishing an habitual love of his
 countrie can be any way inconsistent with
 the duties owing from him, either to friend
 or familie. How little is it too, that we
 can expect from the devotions of such a day
 as this, should they unhappily terminate with
 it? From our present solemnities, how much
 and ardently is it to be wished, that we may
 date, in our public character and manners,
 an higher reverence for the sacred laws of
 heaven, a more animated pietie, a more en-
 larged and cordial benevolence, and a nobler
 superioritie to the alluring vanities of life!
 And these are indeed the effects, which gra-
 titude to the Almighty donor, for the bles-
 sings, which we now commemorate, will
 naturally produce, when once it comes to
 be the deeply fixed and abiding principle of
 the soul, and not the transient passion of a day.

Let us therefore now, in the fourth place,
 join with the pious Israelites mentioned in the
 text, in our most devout and humble acknow-
 legements

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legements of God, as being indeed the origin and source of our national prosperitie, and of all our public blessings. “ They went
“ unto their tents joyful and glad of heart,
“ for all the goodness, that the Lord had
“ done for David his servant, and for Israel
“ his people.” By “ David his servant” may be meant, either Solomon himself, much in the manner of calling the Roman emperors in succession, Cæsar, after the name of the first ; or else the real person of David. Upon the former interpretation it will be in this clause of the text implied, that in the days of Solomon so highly prosperous, the happiness of the king and the people were looked upon as inseparably united, that they had then no apprehension of a divided court and countrie-interest, but with better sentiments concluded, that the blessings they were then rejoicing in, were blessings conferred in common “ upon David
“ the servant” of the most high “ and
“ upon Israel his people.” Upon the latter, it will carry in it this important reflection, that a people’s gratitude for the present blessings of heaven ought not to eradicate their remembrance of its former mercies. And, upon this principle, what an inexhaustible

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theme of praise do the services of this day include? what mighty struggles have we heretofore maintained for our national liberty and independence; for the sacred rights of conscience and religion! through what a series of signal mercies have these inestimable blessings been transmitted to us! And now again what multiplied favors shewn us on the part of heaven! "As we have *heard*, so "have we" now "*seen* in the citie of the "Lord of hosts, in the citie of our God." "O that" we might but with due fervor and enlargedness of spirit "praise the Lord "for his goodness, and for his wonderful "works unto us" "the children of men." There are two advantages, which would from hence eminently accrue. In the first place, this grateful sense of a divine providence will be the most effectual check upon that vanitie and presumption, which are apt to arise out of such signal successes, when independently considered, or in connection only with our national braverie, strength, or wisdom, as the visible and sensibly occurring causes of them. It is easy to see, what a fatal tendencie there is in a disposition of this kind to blast for ever those desirable fruits, which, otherways, we may so naturally expect

expect to reap from these great events. had vanitie and arrogance ruled our councils we had not now been met to celebrate them. And equally certain it is, that even success itself will prove our ruin, should this be the temper inspired by it. how interesting then, as well as laudable, the example, that has been given us from the throne, in “ devoutly adoring the hand of providence in “ our many and signal successes both by sea “ and land?” Considered in this view, what can there be, even in our triumphs, to elate us, more than in disappointment itself? In the one case our humble language must have been; “ it is the Lord, let him do, “ as seemeth good in his sight.” in the other, what ought it to be but this; “ not “ unto us, o Lord, not unto us, but unto “ thy name be the praise?” where then is boasting? is it not alike “ excluded” in both? And then farther, secondly, by thus piously recognizing the providence of heaven in our success we shall naturally be reminded of that question, which else, to be sure, will not be thought of; “ what shall we “ render unto the Lord for all his benefits “ towards us.” We cannot be “ profit- “ able unto him, as he, that is wise, is

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“profitable to himself.” And yet we cannot but, on the other hand, conclude, that something more must be due in gratitude for such signal favors, than the mere “sacrifice of our lips.” To content ourselves with this, would be but very disingenuous conduct towards our earthly sovereign; for the “worthie deeds, that by his “providence have been done to this nation.” can it then, without the height of profaneness, be deemed a sufficient return for the favors of the Almighty? it surely cannot. But, as the earthly prince may justly expect a more chearful obedience and a higher spirit of loyalty from his subjects in proportion to the proofs he is giving them of his princely goodness and fatherly affection, it is only, as in passing on to these concluding reflections has been already hinted, by our future temper towards the Almighty sovereign, that the sinceritie of our present services can be evinced. Henceforth therefore let it be our sollicitude, more than ever, to “break off our “sins by righteousness, and our” transgressions “by shewing mercie to the poor.” Let the “goodness which the Lord” has shewn us, excite in our minds a so much greater abhorrence of the iniquities, by which we have been

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been offending him. Nor let it ever be the dreadful aggravation, both of our national wretchedness and guilt in some future day, that such conspicuous demonstrations of his love and mercie, as we have now been celebrating, could not prevail upon us to renounce them,

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been offending him. Nor let it ever be the
 cherished aggression, both of our national
 wickedness and guilt in some future day,
 that such conscious demonstrations of his
 love and mercy, as we have now been cele-
 brating, could not prevail upon us to re-
 nounce them.

The

The NATURE and GUILT of
MURDER.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at BARBICAN,

MAY 11, 1760.

On Occasion of the unhappy Fate of EARL
FERRERS; who, on the preceding 5th of May,
suffered Death, according to the Sentence of the
Law, for that horrid Crime.

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.

JUV. SAT. II. v. 83.

THE NATURE AND GUILT OF
MURDER.

A

SERMON

Preached at BARRICKAN,

MAY 11, 1870.

On occasion of the unhappy Fall of HARRY
JARRIS; with an address on the preceding Sabbath day.
Entered Daily, according to the sentence of the
Law, for the Public Office.

Printed and Published for the Proprietor.

J. W. BART, H. V. & Co.

S E R M O N XIV.

I. J O H N III. 15.

*Whoſoever hateth his brother, is a “mur-
“ derer :” and ye know, that no “mur-
“ derer” has eternal life abiding in him.*

THOUGH it would be highly unnatural, not to be indulging some tender emotions of pitie and compaſſion towards that unhappy criminal, who, having ſo much diſgraced humanitie and diſhonored his noble birth, by “ ſhed-
“ ding innocent blood,” has now ſuffered the righteous ſentence of the law; though we cannot but heartily ſympathiſe with his afflicted friends and relatives, who are now bemoaning his untimely and wretched fate, as well as with the diſtreſſed and ſorrowful familie, that, through his atrocious guilt, have

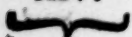
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have been deprived of a head and father: yet are there other sentiments alike interesting and important, which, it is much to be wished, might, upon such an occasion as this, be impressed upon our minds, and which, according to the real truth and nature of the case, it may with equal propriety be expected to produce. And now, that mere curiosity may have been in some measure satiated with the mournful novelty of the event, and the singularity of those proceedings it has given rise to, now that national justice has been fully satisfied, now that he is removed for ever, beyond the influence of all earthly power and jurisdiction, and has been so awfully consigned over to the equitable determinations of a still higher tribunal, even that of the great, omniscient judge himself; we may perhaps be at leisure, for applying our thoughts a while to this farther improvement, which is to be made, of transactions, that have been so newly passing before our eyes, that have been so much the subject of every one's conversation, and which, all must indeed allow, to be in the nature of them so deeply serious and affecting. And here, amidst all that horror and indignation, which we cannot but conceive against a crime so atrocious

atrocious and malignant, and notwithstanding those tender sympathies, of which I have been speaking, and which it would be quite barbarous and inhuman not to feel; we, ought, I think, to reflect both with pleasure and with gratitude; nay, by these very sentiments we are led to do so: we ought, I say, to reflect both with pleasure and gratitude, upon that signal proof, that has in these late proceedings been given us, not now to mention another recent instance in the kind, of the impartial justice of our country. The verdict given by the right honorable house of peers, is, indeed, a noble imitation of that God, who is “no respecter of persons.” And, when we see the servant for the robbing of his master, and the master for the murder of his servant, equally left to undergo the fate to which the just and necessary severity of the laws had doomed them, it shews us how safe we are, under our present happy government, in our persons and in our properties, and may suffice to convince us, that no rank or station of life can screen the iniquitie, or ward off the punishment, of those, who would injure and oppress us, and that outrage and insolence must expect in vain to

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shelter themselves under the protection of majestie, from the justice of those laws, which it is indeed the principal honor of majestie to defend. In these instances, as well as in those rewards and honors, that have been lately conferred upon some of conspicuous merit among us, we see the great end and design of government, according to the apostles account of it, very happily exemplified. “ For rulers are not a terror to
“ good works, but to the evil. wilt thou
“ then not be afraid of the power? do
“ that, which is good, and thou shalt have
“ *praise* of the same. For he is the minister
“ of God to thee for good. But, if thou do
“ that, which is evil, be afraid; for he
“ beareth not the sword in vain: for he is
“ the minister of God, a revenger to execute
“ wrath upon him that doeth evil.” And the greater our abhorrence of those crimes, the ignominious, but equitable, punishment of which has been so lately inflicted under the public eye, upon the respective perpetrators of them, so much the greater, according to the tenor of the preceding reflections, ought to be our gratitude, both to heaven and to our earthly rulers, for that just and impartial administration of civil government, under which no
such

such crimes will be suffered to escape with impunity. Nor is that pomp and solemnity of justice, which, in one of these instances has been so highly remarkable and conspicuous, intended only to gratify the external eye, or to strike the imagination merely with some present idea of dignity and grandeur, but by these intervening methods to affect the morally apprehending power with the dignity of justice, and with a becoming sense of that reverence we owe both to the laws of our country in general, and to the immediate public dispensation of them. By such august and solemn proceedings likewise we are led to reflect, with the greater seriousness and recollection of spirit, upon the nature and malignity of the crime, that gave occasion for them. And by such reflections, not only will our sense of the turpitude and deformity of vice in general be very happily strengthened and confirmed, but we shall be likewise led into such an examination and review of our own characters, as may be of the highest advantage for the preservation and security of our innocence, and in no small degree conducing to the accomplishment of that request, which we may all of us with so much propriety

be putting up to heaven in our own behalf, nay ought, with deep humilitie, from the psalmist, to adopt; “keep back thy fervant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me, then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.” Perhaps indeed, we may be ready to conclude it absolutely impossible, that we ourselves should ever arrive at any such enormitie in vice, and may therefore think the proprietic of our own characters to be but little depending upon any reflections of this sort. But we may do well to remember that this is indeed the very idea, the peculiar and discriminating tendencie of lawless and ungoverned passions, to betray men into such enormities, as they themselves are not aware of. Or, if we consider a crime of this nature as more deliberately perpetrated, such an absolute insensibilitie and hardness of heart, which must in this case have preceded the commission of it, could only have been contracted by the gradual advance and long indulgence of some corrupt and vitious habit of mind. And, this, we are to recollect, must have had its beginning in some slighter inordinacie of affection, from which we ourselves

selves may not be altogether free. And there was a time, no doubt, when lord Ferrers, thought as little, as any of us can do at present, that he should ever be himself a murderer. Should we, however, be able to acquit ourselves, even of the possibilitie of committing this crime, according to the strictly literal and customary idea of it, yet the words of the text, upon the first reading of them, may suffice to remind us, that the guilt of it may, in other ways, be contracted. For, whosoever hateth his "brother is a murderer; and ye know, that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." In farther discoursing upon which words I propose,

First, to make some observations upon the crime itself of murder, according to the customarie and immediate notion of it.

Secondly, to illustrate the truth and propriety of that more extended idea, that is given of it in the text; "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." And then conclude with pointing out in the

Third place, the improvement to be made of these reflections, and which is summarily comprehended and implied in the concluding clause of the text; "and ye know,

“ that no murderer hath eternal life abiding
“ in him.”

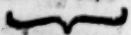
In the first place then, let us make a few observations upon the crime itself of murder, according to the customarie sense and idea of it. And we may consider it, either in the origin or inciting causes of it; in its consequences and effects; or, thirdly in its attending circumstances and several aggravations. This last particular is, indeed, very much depending upon the inward motives inducing to it. And these are various. Such as pride and ambition, revenge, and envie, extravagant anger, the sallies and riot of intemperance, the importunate demands of an high, luxurious taste, covetousness, or lastly, the desire of conceling some other crime. Various too are the injuries and sad disorders arising from these several causes. But murder is the extremest and most fatal effect of them; as will appear from reflecting awhile upon the immediate and necessary consequences of it. These are; as to the person murdered, his being deprived for ever of all the pleasures and enjoyments of this life, and of all the advantages and opportunities it afforded for promoting his meetness and preparation for a succeeding state of being;
of

of the smallest of which privileges and blessings no man on earth had any right to deprive him. To his familie and friends an irreparable injurie is done, in their being thus violently debared from all farther intercourse and connection with him: and to the communitie in general, the highest damage, that in the case of any single individual it can possibly incur, by the total loss of all his labors and services to the public; to which it had a clear and unalienable right, so long as the providence of God should see fit to continue him unhurt by any of the merely natural causes of death and dissolution. And if the robbing any one individual of but a small and inconsiderable part of his single propertie alone, be a crime universally infamous and justly exposing to the severitie of law, how dreadfully heinous and aggravated indeed, must be that of murder, which at once robs, both the person, on whom it is committed, his friends, and the communitie at large, of every right and privilege belonging to him, as a man and member of societie here on earth, and of all the benefits, that might have accrued either to himself, his familie, or the public, from the use and exercise of his powers and faculties

among mankind. And all this in direct and impious violation of that sacred ordinance and decree of heaven, by virtue of which “all nations of men have been made of one blood, for to dwell upon the face of the earth.” But, though such be the horrid malignitie of the crime universally considered, and upon whomsoever perpetrated, yet is it capable of being very highly aggravated by the peculiar circumstances attending it, in this or that particular instance. As, for example, when it is the effect of long premeditation, of deliberate contrivance and formed design; when such pains and tortures are inflicted in the perpetration of it, that are no way necessary to the accomplishment of the horrid act; when the outrage is done upon a person of eminent rank, importance and usefulness in public life, especially, if this extremest violence be offered him, when actually engaged in the duties of his function and appointed office; when it is committed upon one, who has placed some peculiar degree of confidence in the murderer, induced perhaps to do so by peculiar protestations of friendship, that had, on his part, been made, with the design of executing more effectually his diabolic purpose; or, lastly, when

when perpetrated upon a person, to whom we ourselves are under every possible obligation and tie of gratitude. And it is this last mentioned circumstance, that makes the murder of a parent to be a crime so inexpressibly flagitious and execrable. And yet Solon, the celebrated legislator of Athens, made no law against it. And being asked the reason, he replied, that he did not believe it possible, that any human being could be vile enough to commit it. These are observations abundantly sufficient to shew, that the universal abhorrence, which is conceived against the murderer, and that unrelenting justice, with which the severest punishment is, in all civilized nations, inflicted upon him, is very far from being the effect merely of long established custom and authority, but the genuine sentiment and suggestion of nature, placing this crime, according to all the fundamental principles and ends of society, in the highest possible degree of guilt.

Let us therefore now proceed to illustrate, in the second place, the truth and propriety of that more extended idea, that is given of it in the words of the text: "whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer." Under



the term or appellation of brother, you will easily apprehend, that we are to include, not merely those, who stand related to us, in that degree of consanguinitie, nor yet merely and alone the more diffused relationship, which comprehends all, that are more immediately connected with us, either in affinity or in blood, but, that it is a term of the same universal extent and application, as that of neighbor in the sacred writings; and that by the brother here spoken of, is meant our brother in humanitie, every one, who partakes with us in the same common nature, and who stands united to us in the same reciprocal obligations of religion, moralitie and social life. And as for that other term, “hating;” it is often used in scripture to denote, not so much any direct propensities of malice and ill-will, as the absence, or rather a less degree of love. Thus Jacob’s “hating” Leah, is only to be understood, as appears from the immediately preceding verse, of his “loving Rachael more than her.” In like manner, when it is said, in the name of the sovereign Deitie; “Jacob have I loved, but Esau “have I hated,” the meaning is only this; that in the bestowment of external privileges,

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the descendants of Jacob had, according to the order of divine providence, been preferred to those of Esau. The like sense is equally obvious in that language of the gospel, by which we are called upon, in the character of christian disciples, “to *hate*” father, “mother, brother, sister, wife, children,” and all earthly delights and enjoyments whatsoever. That by this we are only to understand an inferior and subordinate degree of affection to these temporal and worldly blessings, when coming in competition with the pleasures of a good conscience and the great concerns and interests of religion, is evident from that other expression, which is used as its opposite and contrary; “whosoever “*loveth* father or mother, brother or sister, “*more* than me, is not worthy of me.” So that by “hating our brother,” we are in the text to understand the absence, or at least, the very great deficiency, of that social principle, that love and benevolence, which ought to be the grand, predominating affection in our minds, and the suffering it to be suppressed and over-ruled by inordinate selfishness. And from hence we see, with what consistencie the “hating our brother,” is, in one view, made to be the condition of
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our christian discipleship, and in another, spoken of as being a crime of the same malignant nature, with that of murder itself. To "hate our brother," even a person so denominated, in consequence of the nearest ties of kindred subsisting between him and us; to "hate our brother," I say, in comparison of the great interests of religion, that is, to prefer religion and a good conscience, to all worldly considerations, to every endearing tie of friendship, is our duty, the plain and obvious dictate of nature, as well as of christianitie and of the gospel. But to "hate our brother," even any of human kind, however remotely connected with us, when the competition is, not between him and religious views and principles, but between him and our own inordinate, selfish passions; that is, to prefer in our regards the suggestions of these inordinate affections, and the suffering them to acquire a greater sway and influence in our minds, than the sentiments of benevolence and love, this is guilt, this is, interpretatively, and in the moral view of it, murder. So says our apostle. And the justness and propriety of the observation will be evident, from considering in the

First

First place, that according to what has, under the preceding particular, been observed, it is only in some of these corrupt and depraved affections, these inordinacies of self-love, that murder can have its spring and origin. It is not a crime committed for the sake of any pleasure accompanying the mere crime itself, as is the case in many other instances of vice. On the contrary, even the perpetrator himself does, generally speaking, in the very commission of it, feel his mind reluctant and averse, and is only reconciled, or rather constrained, to the horrid act, by the impetuosity and violence of some enormous passion. How justly then may those be called murderous affections, without the influence of which the crime of murder could never be committed. And considering to what an amazing height these criminal affections are oftentimes known to arrive, we may justly presume, that this black, atrocious crime would be much more frequent, than it is, were not men of such corrupt and malignant dispositions restrained, by the fear of punishment, from the commission of it. And yet, where this fear is the only restraint in the case, the real guilt must

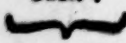
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must fall very little short of that which is imputable to the actual murderer himself.

But farther, secondly, though we should not by any of those inordinate and malignant affections, of which we have been speaking, be instigated to that direct, immediate act of violence, which constitutes the guilt of murder, is it not possible, nevertheless, that, by our indulgence of them, our "brother," some or other of our fellow-creatures, may be hastened into their graves? I believe it is. I believe, there have in fact been numbers, who may as truly be said to have lost their lives, thro' the ill usage or enormous behavior towards them, of those, whom custom has called their friends, as others by a cup of poison, or the point of a sword. And is not this murder? have I any more right to take away the life of my neighbor, or my brother, by my insolent, ungrateful, contemptuous carriage towards him, by my malicious treatment of him, by cruel, barbarous oppression, by an unnatural opposition to his generous and laudable views, than by any external instrument of death? or, what, if, through his own fortitude and resolution, he should escape this consequence, is my crime the less?

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less? Nay, may not the enormities of vitious practices in general, have the same fatal effects, even upon those who are not the immediate objects of them? It is the natural tendency of all vice and wickedness, to grieve and distress the spirits of the good and virtuous, who are only the witnesses and observers of it; especially in the case of our nearest relatives and friends. Of this there are many dead, and many dying parents, that have had the sad and home felt experience. On this account all vice and iniquity, whatsoever, has a murdering tendency. And this grief and disturbance, which it gives to the minds of the pious and good, and by which they are so often brought down with sorrow to their graves, ought ever to be considered as an additional degree of guilt inseparable from the practice of it. It is true, that these fatal effects of wickedness in others, upon the minds of those, who are either the objects, or the observers of it, are produced in a manner gradual and almost imperceptible. But this is rather an aggravating, than an alleviating, circumstance, in the case; unless we can suppose it to be any kindness to another to kill him by a lingering death, a death of months and years

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years; and not rather by some speedy and instantaneous method of dispatch. Such are the pernicious and deadly effects, or tendencies at least, of "hating our brother," of being only defective in that love and charitie we owe him; much more, of indulging any contrary passions towards him, even though it should not terminate in the extremest act of violence and outrage. But should we be able to acquit ourselves, even as to both the preceding particulars; that is, of murder, considered, either in the outrage strictly so called, or in the tendencie and gradual influence of our actions to the taking away of another's life. Yet it is to be remembered, In the third place, that all vice and wickedness, all inordinate selfishness, has in it, according to the essential nature of moral evil, the very same kind of guilt, though in differing degrees, with that, which constitutes the malignitie of murder itself. We have already seen, that, what makes this to be a crime so horrid, is its being the highest injury done to societie, by depriving at once the person murdered, his friends, his countrie, of all the comforts and all the advantages of his present being. But is it not the immediate and necessary tendencie of all vice whatsoever, in proportion to the degree of its

its prevalence, to be in some similar manner, hurtful and injurious to society? "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." But the want of love, and still more, the indulgence of those passions, that are directly the reverse of it, such as covetousness, revenge and envy, are certain "ill" to him. So far therefore, as any vicious passions are indulged by us, we are, at least, partial murderers. We are in some degree injuring our "brother," and acting contrary to the welfare and interests of society. And were it possible, that we should, by any method, deprive any, among our fellow-creatures, of all his health and spirits, of all his worldly friendships and comforts, of all his reputation and usefulness amongst mankind, without depriving him of life itself; he, that should do this, might be a more dexterous, but, not a more innocent murderer, than, if by poison or the dagger's point, he had taken away even that. Thus clear and evident is it, according to the maxim of the apostle in our text, that, "whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer." And for these reasons, I doubt not, but that there are those, that will be both arraigned, tried, and condemned for murder hereafter, who may be passing

passing for saints at present. This, however, is certain, that, whoever he be, that suffers the selfish and corrupt affections to predominate, every such person, is, in the prevailing cast and complexion of his soul, of the same character, with the murderer himself, though not perhaps so deeply guilty. And now,

Thirdly, let us consider a little of the improvement, that is to be made of the preceding reflections, and which is briefly summed up by the apostle himself, and implied, in the concluding clause of the text. "And ye know, that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." you will all readily allow, that the murderer, is acting in direct and flagrant contrariety to every principle of religion, and to all his hopes of immortalitie. you will acknowlege it to be a character inexpressibly vile and enormous. what then is the consequence? why. I cannot but answer in the

First place, that, if murder be a crime thus deeply flagitious and detestable, even though perpetrated, but in one single instance, throughout the whole period of life, what must we think of ambitious kings and persecuting priests, who murder their fellow-
creatures

creatures by thousands at once, who carry on this murdering practice for a long succession of years; and this without the least of seeming horror or remorse. But not now to enlarge upon a topic of this kind, let me observe

Secondly, that in what has been said we plainly see, in what manner we ought to be affected, in the consideration and review of our own personal character, by such solemn scenes, and such particular instances of human guilt and iniquitie, as have given rise to our present reflections on this subject. We can all very readily acquit ourselves of that crime, for which the late unhappie nobleman, has suffered, with so many deserved circumstances of infamy and disgrace. And I hope, we are all of us cherishing in our breasts the deepest abhorrence and detestation of it. But let us not take occasion from hence to exult in the imaginarie perfection of our own characters. And, indeed, what slender ground of boasting, merely in your being free from the very worst of crimes? Nay, let me be permitted to ask, strange as the question may seem to you; are you absolutely sure, that you have not some tendencies even to that? have you

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no latent, lurking seeds, no small remains, of those corrupt affections, one or another of them, from which alone, as we have seen, this horrid crime can in any instance be supposed to procede? might not the murderer himself be once as free from them, as you are now? "let him, therefore, that thinketh he stands take heed, lest he fall." "Consider thyself lest thou also be tempted?" Remember the case of Hazael. with what indignation did he express himself against the prophet, for supposing him capable of such a crime? "is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" and yet he did it. Be it then hence forth an habitual maxim with you, that you can have no absolute securitie against being yourselves the perpetrators of a deed so horrid, than by continually cherishing in your minds the principles of a sincere and universal benevolence to all your fellow-creatures, and of an intense and ardent love, to the great father of mercies and fountain of every good; together with the most self denying and moderate views, as to the gratifications and pleasures of this life. And therefore Thirdly, and in subserviencie to these happy purposes, let what has been said in illustrating

illustrating the sentiment of the text, convince you of the horrid turpitude and malignitie of all vice, and iniquitie, in whatever form appearing, or in whatever particular degree of influence predominant. Be your vitious affections of one kind or of another, remember, I entreat you, that in proportion to their prevalence in the mind, they do of necessity partake in the nature and guilt of murder. For he that "hateth his brother," is a "murderer; and ye know, that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." "Examine yourselves therefore, whether ye be in the faith, search and trie your ways;" and "have nothing more to do with the unfruitful" deadly, murdering "works of darkness, but rather reprove them."



illustrating the sentiment of the text, con-
 vince you of the world's impurity and the
 dignity of its vice, and inducing in what-
 ever form appearing, or in whatever parti-
 cular degree of influence predominant. No
 your vision of things of any kind or of any
 other, however, I cannot you that in pro-
 portion to their prevalence in the mind,
 they do of necessity produce in the nature
 the guilt of murder. For as the "black
 his brother" is not a murderer; and as
 I know that no murderer has eternal life
 abiding in him. "Examine yourselves
 therefore, whether ye be in the faith."
 teach and let your eyes, and I have
 nothing more to do with the matter.
 I only mention it, "what I cannot say
 better myself than I can say it."
 I have said all that I have to say on
 this subject, and I leave it to you.

On the CHARACTER and FATE of
PRINCES.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the OLD JEWRY,

NOVEMBER 16, 1760.

On Occasion of the INTERMENT of his late sacred
Majestie King GEORGE the Second; Novem-
ber 11, 1760.

SEK M

On the CHARACTER and FATE OF
PRINCER

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the OLD FERRY,

November 16, 1760.

On Occasion of the Interment of his late father
Majestic King GEORGE the Second; Novem.

ber 11, 1760.

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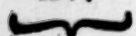
SERMON XV.

2. CHRONICLES XXXV. 24.

And he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers: and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

SINCE the death of our late gracious sovereign, I have once and again been your humble and affectionate monitor, in urging the improvement of an event so awful in its nature, so alarming in its circumstances, and so fully fraught with the most important instructions to persons of every rank and condition, and, with a voice so peculiarly solemn and affecting, reminding them of their own approaching fate. I am likewise very sensible, that the great and ultimate design of such events, considered in a religious and moral view, is, not that our thoughts

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should be wholly occupied by the immediate scene itself, but, that, through its happy influence upon the mind, we should become more attentive and awake to the duties and obligations of virtue, as founded in the common theorie and sentiments of nature. For this reason it was, that in my last discourse I purposely diverted to a topic somewhat more general in the scope of it; tho' not one wholly unconnected with that more immediate subject of solemn meditation, which has at the present season so much engaged our attention. Yet now that the venerable remains of majestie have, with such becoming pomp, and, with every just and laudable token of respect and reverence, been committed to the silent tomb, I should think myself unpardonably remiss, somewhat more than brutishly stupid and insensible, did I not take this earliest opportunitie of invigorating and enforcing, so far as any labors of mine may be in this way effectual, those devout sentiments and views, which a scene so greatly awful must have already impressed upon our minds, by confining my discourse to such reflections, as are in a more peculiar manner adapted to it; though still with an ultimate reference of all to the farther and more complete establishment

establishment in the heart of those principles of virtue and pietie, that are in every condition of life and amidst all its vicissitudes alike obligatorie and important; and not merely to the seriousness of the present hour. And, indeed, scarcely can any thing appear more evident, than the conspiring tendencie of those events, events so admirably adapted to operate upon almost every principle and affection of our natures, which, in the order of divine providence, have for some later years been passing, either within our own borders, or, at least, under our special notice, not only to rouse and awaken our national virtue, but to give it that stabilitie and permanence, and to produce such a solid and deeply rooted renovation in our public manners; as, should it indeed be the happy effect of them, cannot but be attended with the most desirable and important consequences, not only in relation to our own advancing glorie and felicitie, as a people, but to the interests of virtue and truth, libertie and religion throughout the world. One while we have been alarmed with the horrors and commotions of rebellion and intestine war, exciting the tenderest fears in behalf of parent, brother, friend, and offspring. At
another

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another the very earth itself, as if shocked and terrified at the stupiditie and wickedness of its inhabitants, after some gentle tremors, did by the most amazing convulsions, and the consequent tremendous fate of a not far distant metropolis, with the most solemn and awakening voice, remind us, that “here we have no continuing citie;” and that for aught that we can tell, for aught, that human sagacitie can contrive, or the mightiest efforts of human power effect, we are every moment liable to a dissolution more instantaneous than the rising thought, or in the quickest twinkling of an eye, to be for ever deprived of all, that has hitherto been contributing to make life desirable. These are events, that have either been accompanied, or soon succeeded, by some very mournful breaches in our illustrious, royal familie. And now, after the most glorious triumphs, that have been attending his arms, and such national blessings, under his auspicious reign, by heaven conferred, as carry in them the most powerful address to the grateful and ingenuous principles of our natures, we are called upon to lament the death, and have with weeping eyes beheld the solemn obsequies, of our much beloved sovereign himself.

self. Nor is there any one of those particulars, that are in the text enumerated concerning Josiah, which we may not, with the greatest propriety and use, somewhat more distinctly consider and illustrate, as applicable to this truly mournful occasion.

HE DIED; such is the fate of the greatest kings and princes; of the mightiest and most triumphant potentates; their fate in common with the meanest of human kind. Could even the highest splendor and magnificence of kingly power, could the fairest assemblage of royal virtues, could the loyalty and ardent wishes of an affectionate and endeared people, have warded off the stroke of death, our late sovereign had, indeed, “lived for ever.” Yet in him at length; be heaven praised, that this unwelcome proof of it has been so long delayed; in him at length we have seen, that it is in the sovereign councils of heaven “appointed “unto all men once to die.” And, as the mightiest of kings and earthly potentates are with others equally subject to this common fate, so also do they stand alike exposed to the same variety of accidents and diseases, by any of which it may be incured. Nor can they, any more than others, defer it,
till

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till some distant period ; till this or that favorite measure of government shall have been fully ripened for execution, till such a conquest shall have been made, such a territorie gained, or some neighbouring hostile power subdued. But, whenever the Almightye sovereign ordains, their “breath goeth forth.” And “in that very” hour, be it in the prime of life, or in the midst of their days, be it in peace or war, be it in glorie and renown, or under the dishonor of weak and pernicious councils ; in that very hour “their thoughts,” their every scheme and project, relative to worldly power and dominion, felicitie and grandeur, must for ever “perish.” And, when we consider this ; when we recollect that the lives of princes are thus equally precarious and dependent, with that of the meanest of those, over whom they rule, that it is heaven alone, which “setteth up “one and removeth another ;” when we recollect the various instances of their falling by the mortal stroke, at a time, when, considering their age and healthful constitution, it might have been least expected, and when, on account of some critical conjuncture in the affairs of government, it was most of all to be deplored ; we cannot, I think,

I think, but offer up our sincerest thanksgivings to heaven, even whilst lamenting the death of our late gracious sovereign, that since the fatal stroke was not to be eluded, it has, at least, been given at the time, and with the circumstances, so nearly coincident even with our own most affectionate and warmest wishes. “He died,” after a reign, that had been happily lengthened out to such a period, as to afford his subjects the most indisputable proof and demonstration, amidst its various incidents and vicissitudes, difficulties, and perplexities, of his unshaken fidelity to their interests, and to impress upon their minds such a sense of his royal virtues, as we trust not even the most resplendent glories of a succeeding reign will be able to efface. “He died,” when passing his venerable and hoarie days in the most vigilant endeavors for the honor of his crown and the prosperitie of his people; not suffering even the infirmities of so advanced a life, to abate his zeal for the public good, and thus giving the most incontestable evidence and proof of it. “He died,” at the period, when his fame, as the “defender” of the protestant “faith,” and the assertor of Europe’s liberties, was in all its blaze of glorie. “He died,”

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“died,” when, after the long contentions of faction, the very name of it had been for some time forgotten, and when every partie, every heart were united in the most ardent zeal and affection, both for his person and for his government. “He died” with the peculiar satisfaction of leaving a people thus highly prosperous, thus firmly united, to be governed by one of his royal offspring, who, with all the advantages of youthful vigor and resolution, has yet had time enough to learn from his fair example, the wonderous art of making nations happy. And then, lastly, as to the circumstances of his death, that were more immediately personal, “he died,” without either the tedious, or the painful, formalitie of dying. and after a life of activitie, health, and vigor, after a graceful old age passed in retirement, but not lethargic indolence, without a pang or sigh, without one disturbing or anxious thought, he bid adieu to all his earthly honors, to every earthly scene, and with the utmost dignitie, at the sovereign command of heaven, withdrew into the more glorious world of spirits. That world, where, freed from all those impediments, to which even kingly virtue must be subject here, his great, exalted worth will

will shine still more refulgent, where the imperfections of the man will be lost in the glories of the monarch, and that humanitie, clemencie, and justice, that tender affection for the peace and liberties of his subjects, which, during so long a period of government, and amidst so many perplexing scenes of it, appeared invariably and uniformly to animate his conduct, will, through the mercies of the supreme, omnipotent Lord of all, be crowned with those unfading honors; in comparison of which, even his own earthly diadem must shrink into absolute meanness and contempt. Thus “died” our late illustrious sovereign. And at the same time, that by this first particular of the text, we are led into so many pleasing reflections, by which to mitigate and allay those generous sorrows, which tender, grateful, and sympathizing nature cannot but, on occasion of his decease, be indulging, how many useful lessons may we discern, that are, with the utmost propriety and force of argument to be deduced, for the regulation of their conduct, both by princes and by their subjects, from that unavoidable and universal mortalitie, decreed alike for the monarch and for the slave.

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With respect to the prince or sovereign himself; what can we better wish for in his behalf, whether we regard his own peace and honor, or the welfare and happiness of his people, rare and unfrequent, as may have been such an application of the precept, than that he should “be clothed “with humilitie?” Whence that tyrannie and oppression, those exorbitant and lawless exactions, those ravages of the hostile sword, those murders and assassinations, that, in instances almost innumerable, have stained the character of monarchs, and transmitted it with such indelible opprobrium to posteritie, but from their pride and insolence, and that vain imagination they have been so fond of entertaining, and in which they have been so much encouraged by the base and venal flatterer, of their being something more than mortal? But are they so indeed? are they not, on the contrarie, equally dependent, with the meanest of their subjects, for every breath they draw, upon that invisible, superior power, who, whenever he pleaseth can throw “contempt” even “upon princes,” and convince both themselves and all around them, that in spite of their highest earthly grandeur, riches, and authoritie, they are to him,

but, “ as clay in the hands of the potter?” among those various dangers and diseases, which in the order of providence are operating, as the instruments of death, which of them is it, that with all the prerogatives of royalty they are able to controule? And being in this respect equally subject, with the lowest of mankind, to the sovereign will and appointment of heaven, it must from hence evidently follow, that they are equally the creatures of God, and, by consequence, equally accountable before his tribunal, for the use, which in their peculiar station they shall have made of those reasonable and moral powers, with which, in common with the rest of mankind, they have by the supreme, universal parent been endowed. And is it possible, that there should be in nature a more effectual cure for that vilest and most pernicious evil, that has ever yet infected human kind, I mean the ambition and tyrannie of princes, than a deep and serious reflection upon an equalitie like this; an equalitie in every thing, that is most essential to the happiness of man, both in the present and in the future world, subsisting between them and every individual subject of their dominions? can it ever be

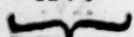
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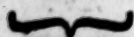
seriously believed, that the great and sovereign creator, the common parent of all, who gave being alike to all his intelligent and moral offspring of human kind, on purpose that they might be the objects of his own paternal care and bountie, should have invested so small a number, as have been distinguished by the regal stile, with the power of tyrannizing over the rest; their fellow-creatures, their fellow-mortals, and in common with themselves, the subjects of his own sovereign and universal, but yet most equitable, mild, and righteous government? could the historic page have ever been disgraced with the characters of an Alexander or a Cæsar, had those, who once bore these infamous names, with the least degree only of sober recollection, attended to such principles, as these? how absolutely effectual then must they be, when habitually, seriously, and frequently recured to, towards eradicating the slightest tendencie to those ambitious and tyrannic views; the dreadfully mischievous and fatal effects of which, it has been one of the principal labors of historie to record? It is not, however, enough in a prince, that he avoid the character of a tyrant. he must be moreover the affectionate guardian

guardian and protector of the public weal. Not to be the plague, the scourge, the terror of the world ; not to oppress, insult, enslave ; these are the goodly qualities even of inanimate forms. They cannot therefore constitute the just honors of majestie. And without something more than this, with what safetie or confidence can any one, having sustained the regal character, appear before the tribunal of the sovereign and eternal judge ? He, the great “ king of kings, and “ lord of lords,” has said concerning kings and sovereign potentates on earth ; that “ they are gods.” But how ; not in dignitie and power alone, but on account of the salutary ends and gracious intentions of their office ? An office, according to the purport of this scriptural and sacred language, designed to be the completest image of the divine universal government. The proper exercise of which, therefore, must needs consist in the most extensive and exalted benevolence. For “ the Lord is good to all, “ and his tender mercies are over all his “ works.” And, throughout his widely extended and boundless empire, the sole, the sovereign, the immutable, and universal law, is the happiness of its subjects. And

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yet, if princes have any right to tyrannize, this must needs be a right derived from heaven. And where will this terminate; but in making God himself, in direct contradiction to these acknowledged, obvious ideas of his essential nature and moral government, to be a tyrant? Would the earthly sovereign then appear with joy and honor before the high tribunal of heaven, would he be indeed “ a God” on earth, and not the hideous, hated idol of arbitrary and despotic power, let him diffuse the gentle, yet enlivening influences of a godlike benevolence all around him. let him be the guardian and assertor of libertie and the laws. let him be the refuge of oppressed and afflicted innocence. let him be inflexible and impartial in the distribution of public justice. yet, “ in “ the midst of justice,” let him, after the example of the sovereign and Almighty king, “ remember mercie.” But there is still another consideration to be urged upon the prince or sovereign ruler, and immediately arising from what has been already insisted upon in relation to that mortalitie, to which, in common with the rest of mankind, he stands unavoidably exposed. Not only sooner or later must he become its victim; but
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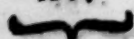
utterly unable is he with all his princely power and authoritie, for a single moment to avert the impending blow, whenever it shall be in the purpose of the most high, to determine the period of his days on earth. Nor is he even privileged to know, at what hour or instant, in what stage or season of life it is, that he is to be called hence. But in that very hour, when himself and all around him may be the least apprehensive of it, when all are with the utmost confidence depending upon the continuance of his life and a long extended reign, suddenly may he be snatched from among men, and all his princely honors for ever buried in the silence and obscuritie of the grave. And are not these reflections, pointing out in the strongest manner, not only the infinite importance in general, of cultivating those virtues, which we have already shewn to be the only substantial excellencies of the regal character, but likewise the high necessitie of immediate activitie, and exertion of all his princely influence and power, in promoting the common happiness of those, to whom God has “ordained” him to be the instrument and “minister of good?” duly reflecting upon these awful and awakening truths, will he

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not instantly perceive, that he has not, more than others, any time to waste upon that rioting and luxurie, or in those vain and senseless gaieties, to which many of princely rank and dignitie have been so intirely addicted, as if they had thought it to be the only intention of providence in advancing them to such superior honors, to allow them their full, unbounded scope in every possible indulgence of appetite and sense? under the influence of them can he fail to discern, that, if he would die in honor, that, if he would be blessed and revered in the memorie of his subjects, it must needs be his wisdom, to be without delay exerting himself in the prosecution of every patriot-measure, and in every generous, godlike effort, for advancing the weal and happiness of his people? And, as, my heart is almost incessantly breathing out its fervent prayer in behalf of our own illustrious young monarch, so my coolest judgment cannot suggest, as expressive of the sincerest attachment to his prosperitie and welfare, a better wish, than that, amidst all the blooming honors of his reign, he may, with the devoutest seriousness be cherishing the thought of death, and remember, that he himself is a perishing, mortal

mortal man, dependent upon the sovereign will of heaven alone for the continuance of his life, and consequently accountable before its high tribunal for the manner, in which he shall discharge that sacred, most important trust, that has now, in the order of divine providence, and with the joyful approbation of a consenting people, been committed into his hands. It is not, that by such sentiments as these, I would wish to suppress the native vigor of his mind. But with the direct contrarie view I would insist upon them, could the opportunitie occur, of animating to a chearful and resolute exertion of it, in the pursuit of all those measures of government, that may most effectually establish his fame on earth and his felicitie above. And upon the brave and generous spirit, this is the only natural effect of them.

But from the mortalitie of princes their subjects, as well as themselves may be deducing the most important and useful instructions. For example, in the first place, if the life of princes be thus wholly dependent upon the sovereign will and appointment of heaven, then undoubtedly to heaven are we ultimately to ascribe our praises, not only for any alleviating circumstances, that

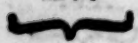
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may attend their death, but for all the preceding blessings too, which we may have been enjoying under their reign and government. For every one of which, however immediately redounding to the honor of the earthly sovereign, and, however justly to be considered, as the foundation of the highest respect to his memorie, we must of necessitie be indebted to that supreme Almighty ruler, who could, whenever he pleased, have remanded him hence. The more sensible therefore we are of the blessings, which we have so long enjoyed under the gentle and auspicious government of his late majestie, the more let our hearts be enlarged in sentiments of praise and gratitude to that God, who, in the mercies of his sovereign providence, continually watched over, guarded and defended a life so valuable and important. Again, secondly, the mortalitie of princes, and their liableness in every season and period of life to receive the most sudden and unexpected summons to resign for ever their earthly pomp and grandeur, may justly abate that envie, with which their condition has been so often viewed, and which has laid the foundation of some of the most flagrant enormities, that have ever been perpetrated

perpetrated amongst mankind. With what amazing and egregious follie is it, that men have thus eradicated every sentiment of justice and humanitie, hardened themselves into monsters of perfidiousness, ingratitude and barbaritie, waded through seas of blood, and spread horror and desolation throughout the world, and all for the sake of obtaining a crown, which the very next moment, they might, by the appointment and decree of heaven, have been called upon to resign, and which, upon the most favourable estimation, they could only for so short a time retain. And with how much ease may all in general be reconciled to their own inferior lot, however remote, not only from the sovereign honors of majestie, but even, from the splendor and greatness of those, who surround it, when they consider, that all these distinctions are in so little a time to be for ever abolished, and that the prince, the courtier, and the peasant, must lie down alike in the dust of the grave. And thus convinced of the transient and decaying nature of all earthly pomp and dignitie, with how much zeal, and chearful alacritie of spirit, may we be applying ourselves to the acquisition of those substantial

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tial and unfading honors, which consist in the puritie and just regulation of our affections, in the imitation and resemblance of divine, eternal excellence, and in the approbation and complacencie of the great creator and sovereign Lord of all? this is that "good part, which can" never "be taken away from us;" which can alone survive the ruins of mortalitie. and these the honors, which death so far from debasing, will render still more illustrious and complete. From the mortalitie of princes likewise, and their liableness, even amidst all the sprightliness and vigor of early life, to become the victims and the prey of death, the subjects even of the best of earthly sovereigns may learn the necessitie of cherishing in their own minds the principles of a sincere and generous concern for the public welfare and prosperitie, and of endeavoring to diffuse such a spirit, as widely as possible, throughout the whole communitie, and to excite the patriot flame in persons of every rank and condition. by this means we shall in the temper and disposition of our minds, be prepared, whatever changes and vicissitudes happen, to appear with unanimitie, zeal, and ardor, in favor of the same excellent

lent constitution and frame of government, and be able to entertain, under God, the chearful hope of continuing to enjoy the inestimable privileges of it, and that, tho' our princes must die, our liberties will be immortal.

BUT it is farther observed concerning Josiah in the text, that he " was buried in " one of the sepulchres of his fathers." And this we may justly presume to have been mentioned, as a circumstance both honorable to himself and pleasing to his subjects. The indignation of a justly incensed people against an iniquitous and oppressive sovereign, has sometimes been expressed by the contempt, with which they have treated his breathless carcase. In our own historie there have been some remarkable instances of the kind. And it must, for certain, be equally natural for those, who have long been rejoicing in the blessings of a mild and propitious reign, to be expressing their veneration for the memorie of that excellent and worthie prince, to whom, under God, they have been indebted for them, by every token of respect even to his bodily remains. This is a circumstance very naturally taken notice of, concerning Jehoiada,

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Jehoiada, though not of the royal house.
“ and they buried him, says the historian,
“ in the citie of David, among the kings,
“ because he had done good in Israel, both
“ towards God and towards his house.”

And with the same obvious proprietic, the like circumstance is here in the text particularised concerning king Josiah. “ they
“ buried him in one of the sepulchres of
“ his fathers.” they thought him worthie of being numbered among the illustrious dead. and sadly would they have regreted it, had they been prevented by such circumstances, as have sometimes attended the death of kings, from paying this mournful token of their respect to him.

IT is farther added, that “ all Judah and
“ Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.” This is evidently to be considered as refering to some such external, public modes of lamentation and sorrow, as are now customarie among ourselves; and which we find to have been as ancient, as the time of the patriarch Jacob. For, when Jacob died, though he was no sovereign, yet “ the
“ Egyptians,” though he was no Egyptian, such was the respect they had for him, and for Joseph his son, “ mourned for him
“ three

“ three-score and ten days.” It is added;
 “ when the days of mourning were passed,”
 which plainly refers to some public external
 tokens of sorrow, as the thing here meant
 by the historian. Though undoubtedly,
 as well here, as in our text, is to be con-
 sidered as principally intended in this lan-
 guage, the honorable remembrance, which
 was entertained in the minds of the sur-
 vivors, of these two venerable characters.
 And both in the case of Josiah, seem very
 fully expressed in what the historian imme-
 diately subjoins. “ And Jeremiah, lamented
 “ for Josiah, and all the singing-men, and
 “ the singing-women spake of Josiah, in
 “ their lamentations to this day, and made
 “ them an ordinance in Israel: and be-
 “ hold they are written in the lamenta-
 “ tions. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah,
 “ and his goodness, according to that,
 “ which was written in the law of the
 “ Lord, and his deeds first and last, be-
 “ hold they are written in the book of the
 “ kings of Israel and Judah.” And to the
 same historic page must be remitted the com-
 plete idea, that is to be formed of our late
 sovereign’s character and worth. The peace
 and prosperitie, which, for so long a succes-
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fion of years, we have under his reign enjoyed, the undisturbed procedure of equitie and public justice, the free and unrestrained exercise of our religious solemnities, the deference shewn to the dictates of private conscience and opinion, our extended commerce, our triumphant arms, will best pronounce his praise. Greatly diversified have been the characters of those several princes, who have filled the English throne. But I think it may, without flatterie be said, sure I am, this is not my intention in saying it; that there is not, among them, any, with which that of his late majestie will not admit of an honorable comparifon. Some of them were, in the course of their reign, attempting the boldest intrusions upon our constitution, and invasions of public libertie. But by him our native rights and immunities were ever held inviolably sacred. Some of them with infinite scandal both to themselves and to the nation, were known to turn their courts at once into the nurseries and highest scenes of rioting and debaucherie. But sobrietie and temperance have eminently distinguished his. Some of them have shone in arms. and, though it will be by all confessed, that our late sovereign was in every respect completely

pletely qualified for being the military hero, he preferred, and let this be spoken as reflecting the highest honor, both upon his understanding and upon the goodness of his heart, the milder glories of a peaceful reign. Yet was he not, in the character of some of our former sovereigns, so absurdly pacific, as not with intrepid bravery to draw the sword of justice, when the repeated insults and long continued encroachments of our inveterate enemy demanded an appeal to it. Concerning others of our princes it is observable, that, after having for a considerable number of years, swayed the scepter with high popularity and renown, they have towards the closing period of their reign, been sinking apace into indolence and contempt. But it is the peculiar glory of George the Second, that his last were his brightest days. And I doubt not, but that you will be all most heartily concurring, in the fervent wish, that the same god-like virtues, which have so much endeared his memory to ourselves, and which will make it venerable to latest times, may adorn and dignify the reign of our present sovereign.

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